POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY

HE RECEIVED A TREMENDOUS BLOW WITH SOME HEAVY INSTRUMENT.

(See our story of the Ratcliff Highway Horror.)

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THE RATCLIFF HIGHWAY HORRORS.

A Full, True, and Particular Account of the Series of Frightful Murders Perpetrated in the East End of London in 1811, and of the Subsequent Arrest, Examination, Suicide, and Weird Burial of the Supposed Murderer, one John Williams.

"Go, hie thee, hie thee, from this slaughter-house,
Lest thou increase the number of the dead.
. . . . A cockatrice hast been hatched to the world,
Whose unavoided eye is murderous."

—SHAKESPEARE, "Richard III.," Act IV., Scene 1.

PART I.

TWICE in its eventful history the East End of the Metropolis experienced a veritable reign of terror through the monstrous deeds of one man. In 1811 the horrors perpetrated in Ratcliff Highway reduced that part of London almost to a state of siege, and history repeated itself in 1888 when a fiend in human shape roamed about its narrow courts and alleys scattering ruin and terror wherever he was drawn by his lust for blood. No murder or series of murders has ever been more often described than those which terrorised the East End in the early part of the last century. The alarm occasioned by such wholesale butcheries pervaded all classes, and reference to the dread affairs is found in many of the best literary productions of that time. Mention of the murders is to be found in the letters of Charles Lamb, the eminent essayist, and other celebrated authors of the period testified to the terror inspired by them in all grades of society. Many wealthy families fled from London as from a place of pestilence, and only a widespread rumour—heaven knows how arising—that the miscreant had gone to the provinces induced them to return.

Masters of households barricaded their doors and slept with loaded pistols beneath their pillows. Nervous women, whom circumstances compelled to live alone, refused to retire to rest at all, and sat up all night, talking with bated breath and fearful glance in threes and fours, for company. Hardly a window could be seen that did not exhibit a musket, a rattle, or a broadsword, that the mysterious miscreant, if he were passing that way, might see that the inmates had at hand the means of defence and the will to use them.

The watch was doubled and trebled, and, as in 1888, amateur detectives and self-appointed constables patrolled day and night the various streets in the East End. The horrible deeds were the actual cause of an invention. Doors were provided with chains at the foot, so that a cautious person summoned by knock or ring need not admit the intruder until he had taken full stock of his person and satisfied himself that the visitor was not a potential robber and murderer.

As I have said, much has been written concerning these affairs, and even in modern and up-to-date literature one often comes across an account of them; but none of these are quite correct or authentic, and a description of them which shall be both cannot fail to be of interest and of value.

Even the great De Quincey, in his treatise, entitled, "Murder as one of the Fine Arts," does not give a perfectly accurate account of the horrors of 1811; although his version, from a literary point of view, is the finest description of a murder extant. The means of procuring the real and actual facts are difficult of access, and not to everyone's hand; but the reader who honours me with a perusal of these lines may rest assured that the following account contains nothing which is not true, and omits nothing which ought to be stated. Authenticity is the *alpha* and *omega* of "FAMOUS CRIMES," and we are glad of an opportunity to present the public with an account of these dire happenings which shall be correct in every particular.

With these few preliminary comments let me proceed with my plain, unvarnished history.

A hundred years ago, that part of London—the London of dark docks and dismal wharves, of foreign seamen and of land-sharks—now known as St. George's-in-the-East, was called Ratcliff Highway, and had been so designated for many years. It was not a pleasant neighbourhood, nor one in which the proverbial "wise man of the East" would venture with a gold chain and a diamond scarf-pin. Doubtful and dangerous characters abounded, and the foreign marauder here joined forces with the home-made article to such effect that the peaceful and law-abiding citizen usually gave "the Highway" the widest of wide berths. Still, even here, there was at least a leaven of respectability, and a few of the older and more permanent inhabitants and shopkeepers were sufficiently reputable. Amongst these "few righteous" was included, in 1811, Mr. Marr, a young tradesman who kept a linen-draper's shop at No. 28, Ratcliff Highway. Marr had at one time been to sea, but, coming in for a nice little property, he resolved to abandon his seafaring life, marry, and settle down, and he had not long been established in this shop when our story opens. At that time his family consisted of his young wife, Cecilia Marr, a male child only a few weeks old, James Gohen, an apprentice boy, and Margaret Jewell, a young girl who was engaged as servant, and who was devoted to her kind master and mistress. Indeed, Mr. and Mrs. Marr were universally liked and well-spoken of by all their neighbours, and by everyone with

whom they came into contact, the wife being very pleasant and pretty, and the husband industrious and agreeable.

Saturday, December 7, 1811, had been a very busy day with Mr. Marr, who was kept abundantly employed by constant customers, and it was not until close upon midnight that he began to think of closing his premises. With this view he and the shop-boy began to replace on the shelves the various bales of goods which he had been showing that evening to purchasers, and a little after twelve a watchman noticed him shutting up the shop windows. After this he told the girl Jewell to fetch some oysters for supper, giving her a one-pound note for that purpose, and she, leaving the outer door ajar, hurried to the shop of a Mr. Taylor, but he had sold out and closed his shop, so that the girl endeavoured to procure the oysters elsewhere. To the fact of the first shop being closed, she undoubtedly owed the preservation of her own life. On her way to another fish shop at John's Hill, she returned past Mr. Marr's shop and noticed him through

Desired her to move on.

the window still behind the counter. She then proceeded to a baker's with the object of paying his account, but his shop was also closed, and, failing to find an oyster shop open, she returned again to her master's shop. She had been gone about twenty minutes, and she was rather surprised to find that the shop door was now securely fastened from the inside. A light within was visible, and she rang at the bell, but no answer being forthcoming, rang and knocked repeatedly, but to no effect. She thought, however, that she heard some person come upstairs while she stood at the door, and imagined it was her master coming to let her in. She also distinctly heard the feeble cry of the infant. At that dramatic moment there is no doubt the murderer was still within the house, but her repeated ringings alarmed him, and he made a hurried escape before it was possible to rob the house. There, however, the girl stood, ringing the bell again and again and kicking at the door until the watchman came along, calling the hour of one. He desired her to move on, not knowing her, and she explained that she was servant there and was locked out. He then remarked that Mr. Marr had not locked the door, and he called out his name very loudly two or three times through the keyhole. The noise attracted the attention of a Mr. Murray who lived next door, and he came out and inquired the cause of the disturbance. The matter being explained to him, Mr. Murray went to the back of his own house, and from there observed that there was a strong light burning at the back of Marr's place. He then forced an entrance through the back, opened the street door, and admitted the girl and the watchman, who had now been joined by another of that not too intelligent fraternity.

The spectacle that confronted them can better be imagined than described, and the poor girl went into violent hysterics at the mere sight of such horrors, which, for a time, seemed to even petrify the men.

The first body seen was that of Mrs. Marr, who was lying on her face with all her clothes covered with blood and her feet towards the door, which at first prevented its being opened. She was quite dead, but not cold. Her head was frightfully fractured, the brains protruding on one side of her injured skull, and she lay in a deep pool of blood. Mr. Marr was found behind the counter with the marks of a tremendous blow on the head and his nose was broken in, the occipital bone also fractured, and the left eye showed traces of a violent blow. The boy Gohen had evidently made some resistance to the murderer, for he was fearfully mangled, having severe contusions on the forehead and nose, with the occipital bone dreadfully shattered and the brains protruding, together with other marks of violence about the body. The baby was found in its cradle, and its age rendered it impossible that it could ever have borne evidence against the ruthless slaughterer of its parents; yet the inhuman murderer had not hesitated to add this smiling innocent to his other victims. The child showed a large incision three inches in depth upon the left side of its throat, and its face on the same side bore several marks of frightful violence.

Such was the scene presented to the gaze of the first spectators of the monster's handiwork. The manner of the murders now seems clear enough. The villain had entered the shop and requested Mr. Marr to show him some stockings, for which purpose the linen-draper had to turn round, with his back to the customer, and face the shelves above the counter. As he was removing a packet from the shelf, he received a tremendous blow with some heavy instrument on the back part of the head, which was renewed, the blow descending on his face as he turned to confront his assailant. The boy, possibly attempting to go to his master's assistance, was then seized, and struck in the same way. Mrs. Marr was below in the kitchen with her baby on her lap hushing it to sleep. The noise and scuffle—momentary as they were—brought her hurriedly upstairs, after placing the child in the cradle, and she was seized by the bloodthirsty monster and instantly despatched with the same instrument as had killed her husband and the boy. The child, disturbed at being hurriedly laid down, commenced to cry, and the murderer descended and added another victim to the holocaust. Thus was the little household wiped out in the course of three or four minutes of time.

The first idea that struck the horrified spectators of this butchery was that the miscreant or miscreants might still be in the house engaged on robbery, and they opened the street door again and gave an alarm. Late as it was, a huge concourse soon gathered, and the utmost excitement prevailed when the nature of the tragedy became known. The nightly watch gathered together, and the drum beat to arms, so huge a crowd gradually collecting that it became necessary to again close the door of the slaughter-house. It was soon made clear that the murderer had made his escape at the back of the house with little or no plunder, and he had doubtless been alarmed by the continued ringing of the servant. In the desk of the shop a sum of £152 was found deposited in a tin box, and no property had been taken from the upper part of the house.

On a thorough search being made, a ship-carpenter's maul, about 8lbs. in weight, broken at the point, and a

brickmaker's long, ripping chisel, about twenty inches in length, were found, the former of these two formidable instruments being covered with fresh blood. Appearances —such, for instance, as the fact of the weapons being found —induced a belief that two men were engaged on this atrocious crime, and it was stated at the time that the prints of feet of different sizes were observed in the mud at the back of the house. It is certain that the escape was made from a window at the rear of the premises, and the neighbourhood must have been well known to the miscreant, for otherwise he could not possibly have found his way. As it was, he found it necessary to throw down some palings and to pass along a narrow path between two fences made for privacy.

The funeral of Mr. and Mrs. Marr and their infant son took place on Sunday, December 15, 1811, at St. George's Church in the East, and was witnessed by an enormous assembly of people, who openly expressed their sympathy with the relations of the deceased, and their detestation of the murderer. Nothing, indeed, so infuriated the populace as the useless murder of the child, and threats as to what they would do if the villain was found were heard on all sides. The body of the unfortunate shopboy was interred in the same burial ground by his own relatives.

On Tuesday, December 10, the coroner's inquest was held, and the deepest interest was manifested in the proceedings. The first witness was a Mr. Salter, a surgeon in Ratcliff Highway, who gave a technical description of the various injuries received by the deceased persons, and then Margaret Jewell, who was greatly affected, and whose evidence was interrupted by a fainting-fit, gave her testimony.

Mr. John Murray, a pawnbroker, of 30, Ratcliff Highway, deposed that about a quarter past twelve on the Sunday morning he was sitting at supper with his family, and he heard a noise in the next house—Mr. Marr's—which appeared to come from the shop floor. It resembled, he said, the falling of a shutter or a chair, and he likewise heard the shrill cry of a boy or a woman, as if it proceeded from someone under the influence of a great fear. At a quarter to one he heard a violent ringing and knocking, which continued till 1.15, when he went out to see what was the matter. He clambered over a wall which separated Marr's house from his, and found the bodies weltering in their gore.

George Olney, a watchman, stated that Mr. Murray suddenly opened the door and said, "For heaven's sake come in and see what dreadful murder is here!" He gave a description of the state in which he found the bodies, and then he produced the ship carpenter's maul, which was seen—the sight sending a thrill of horror through the room—to be still covered with blood and hair.

The jury at the close of the proceedings returned a verdict of "Wilful murder against some person or persons unknown."

While this investigation was proceeding the premises were examined by the sheriffs of London and by all the magistrates; rewards were offered and associations for detecting the guilty persons solemnly formed, a nightly watch was kept up, several arrests were made, and suspicious persons examined. The only available clue to the culprit was the murderous-looking maul, which had been found to bear the letters J. P. in dots, faintly marked, on the crown; but some days were to elapse before this weapon could be traced and identified.

MR. MARR WAS FOUND BEHIND THE COUNTER.

In the meanwhile rumour asserted that the unknown miscreant had fled from London and was ready to resume his butcheries in the large provincial towns, and the alarm spread to the latter.

Terrible proof was now to be given that rumour lied and that the fiendish wielder of the maul was still in town. Not yet had he satisfied his appetite for blood—not yet was he surfeited with human gore. Once more did he venture out under cover of the darkness, and, clad in his long and handsome coat, betake himself to the scene of his next exploit. Once more did he hide a murderous weapon beneath the folds of his ample coat and wait the moment to exterminate another family. Ah, Mr. Williamson! Mr. Williamson! Little do you know that the sands of time

are running out fast for you, that even now the monster is peering at you, his next victim, through the open door, and that in a few moments he will be inside, a tornado of bestial fury, whose very breath speaks murder and sudden death . . . .

A Mr. Williamson at this time kept a public-house at 81, Gravel Lane—an inconsiderable distance from the scene of the late tragedy—bearing the sign of the King's Arms. He was a strong and vigorous old man, whose family consisted of his wife, his grand-daughter, a servant named Bridget Harrington, and a lodger named John Turner. Mr. Williamson was much respected in the neighbourhood, and, rough as it was, he contrived to keep his house as respectably as the best in the vicinity. The rival gin-palaces kept open till half-past twelve, but it was his custom to close his house punctually at eleven, and he never permitted any drunkenness, gambling, or swearing on the premises.

On Thursday night, the 19th of December, 1811, shortly after eleven o'clock, the neighbourhood of Gravel

Into the arms of a watchman.

Lane was dreadfully alarmed by loud cries of murder, and crowds of persons resident on the spot and with their minds still fixed on the late dreadful events, soon collected round the house whence the appalling sounds proceeded. A man was then observed descending, almost in a state of nudity, by a line formed by stringing together two sheets, from an upper window of the King's Arms. He appeared to be in a state of the greatest terror, and on reaching the extremity of his frail rope he was still some eight feet from the ground. However, he was able to drop with safety into the arms of a watchman, and then he announced, in the greatest agitation that "they were murdering the people in the house." "Marr's murderer—now at work," De Quincey makes him say; but his exact words were as I have given them.

A consultation was immediately held, and it was rapidly resolved that an entry should be forced into the house through the cellar flap. By this means a man named Ludgate, a butcher living in Ashwell's Buildings, was the first man to enter, and he was followed by a Mr. Hawse and a constable. Mr. Fox, who resided exactly opposite, went back to fetch his hanger, and he entered with three or four other persons through the front door, which had now been forced open.

They were met by a spectacle as heartrending as that which had been seen at Mr. Marr's. The fore room was in darkness, but a light was burning on a table in the middle room, which was used as a kitchen, and there they came upon the body of Mrs. Williamson. She was lying upon her face along the hearth, with her head towards the door and the throat cut from ear to ear. She was fully dressed, some keys and a box were lying by the side of her, and it appeared that her pockets, which were turned inside out, had been rifled. The servant, Bridget Harrington, was lying between the body of her mistress and the fireplace, with her throat cut, and the whole room was flowing with blood. Besides the throat wound, the servant had received a frightful blow on the head. Mr. Williamson in the meanwhile had been found by those who had descended into the cellar. He was found with his throat cut, lying on his back, with his head on the cellar steps, and he had first been struck down by a tremendous stroke on the skull. The theory was that he had probably descended to draw some beer for a late customer, who was no other than the murderer. While he was gone, the latter assailed the old lady, and it was then that the servant gave a cry which alarmed the lodger lying in bed above. The two women were soon despatched, and then the assassin met Mr. Williamson at the top of the cellar stairs and struck him down, afterwards descending to make doubly sure by cutting his throat.

A search of the premises was commenced immediately, and it became apparent that the villain had left by the back. The inside shutters of one of the back windows had been taken down, and the sash thrown up, while the sill was marked with blood, as with the print of a hand, and there was blood on the inside iron bar. It was a good drop to the ground, which was vacant land belonging to the Dock Company, but there had been plenty of rain recently, and the earth below the window was soft and holding.

It was a very dark night, and it would not be difficult for anyone who knew the neighbourhood to get clear away, although in a back room of the house next door a large company was just then assembled, singing songs and drinking beer, and none of those roysterers saw anyone escape from the back of the King's Arms.

An iron crow, much stained with blood, was found near the body of Mr. Williamson, and, as in the former case, the midnight murderer brought his weapon with him and left it behind.

The little grand-daughter, a child named Stillwell, slept through all these horrors, and was found upstairs in bed and fast asleep by those who had forced an entrance. According to De Quincey, the lodger snatched her from the bed and lowered himself with the rescued child in his arms; but I am bound to correct this error, which makes out the lodger a greater hero than he deserves.

Mr. Williamson was robbed of a watch and what loose change he had about him, but there is little doubt that, as in the previous case, the villain was disturbed before he could achieve the object, viz., robbing the house, of so much indiscriminate slaughter. The murders had been committed by a left-handed man, and this had also been the opinion of the doctors who were consulted in the case of the unfortunate Marrs.

On the first alarm being given—and these fresh horrors plunged all London in a perfect state of frenzy—a picquet of the Tower Hamlets Militia was called out, and, assisted by the panic-stricken inhabitants, volunteers, and the constables, made a most minute search in all possible quarters, going literally from house to house, but without finding any persons to whom more than the most transient and unsubstantiated suspicion could be affixed. The ground seemed to have swallowed this man of blood, and yet he was living close by the scenes of slaughter!

It may be mentioned here that Mr. Williamson was about

fifty-six years of age, his wife about sixty, the servant about fifty, and the grand-daughter, Kitty Stillwell, was about fourteen. The old man had probably made a great resistance, even after the blow which knocked him down the cellar steps, for he was a powerful man, and in addition to his other injuries one of his legs was broken, and his hands were severely cut.

The Government, aroused to action by these fresh outrages, announced a reward of £500 for the discovery of the murderers, and the parishs of Shadwell and Ratcliff offered £210. Twenty guineas was also offered to any person who could prove the selling o the iron crowbar found on the premises, and all possiblesteps taken to trace the owner of this and the other weapos. It is recorded that an extraordinary search was made f labourers' houses in the vicinity of Epping Forest on the stength of some incoherent rumour, and expresses were sent tohe seaports to stop all suspicious-looking persons. In adtion to the rewards specified, a free pardon was promisedo anyone, except the actual murderer, who could bring the criminal to justice, and the following handbill was freely circulated:

THEY CAME UPON THE BODY OF MRS. WILLIAMSON.

"Thames Police Office, Wapping.

"Whereas it is most particularly necessary that any person who may possess any knowledge of the maul with which the barbarous murder in Ratcliff Highway appears to have been committed, should come forward and make the same known, the magistrates have caused the same to be again described, and do most solemnly and urgently require that every person who may be enabled to give the slightest information respecting it do immediately acquaint the magistras therewith. The maul may be seen by any such person on application at this office. The handle of the maul is twenty-three inches long; the head, from the extremity of the face to the pin end, is eight inches and a half, and it has a flaw in the face, and the pin end has been broken off in flakes; it is marked faintly with the letters "J. P." in dots on the crown, near the face, and appears to have been so marked with a coppering punch.

"By Order of the Magistrates,

"E. W. Symons, Chief Clerk.

"December 20, 1811."

About this time two persons were taken into custody on suspicion, one of whom was put back for a second examination. It was shortly afterwards found that this suspect could have had nothing to do with the crimes, and he was set at liberty.

At the coroner's inquest, the most interesting evidence was that of John Turner, a sawyer by trade, who was the person who escaped from Mr. Williamson's house while the murders were being perpetrated, and his account of the fell night's work was listened to with breathless interest. He said that he had lodged in the house of Mr. Williamson for about eight months. His room was the front garret, which was two floors from the ground floor. On the night of the tragedy he had got home about half-past ten, and when he entered the house, Mrs. Williamson was standing at the front door, and she had followed him in. He found Mr. Williamson sitting in his great chair in the middle room, and the servant was in the back room, no one else being in the house that he saw. A man named Samuel Philips then came in, and after asking for a pint of beer, he told the landlord that there was a stout man with a very large coat on peering in at the inner glass door in the passage, and Mr. Williamson, catching up a candlestick, said, "I'll see what he wants." He returned in a minute, saying, "I cannot see him; but, if I did, I would send him where he would not like to be." Philips then went away with his beer, and a Mr. Anderson came in, but did not stay above two or three minutes. Shortly afterwards the servant raked out the fire and Turner went to bed, at which time Mrs. Williamson, carrying a watch and a silver punch-ladle, followed him upstairs to her own room. He heard her close and lock the door and go downstairs again, and then he undressed and got into bed. He had not been there more than five minutes when he heard the front door banged violently to, and almost directly afterwards the servant called out, "We shall all be murdered!" two or three times. Then came the sound of two or three heavy blows, and shortly afterwards, as the listener was sitting up in bed, almost unable to move from fear and horror, he heard the landlord cry out, "I am a dead man!" About two minutes after, he got out of bed and listened at the door, which had no fastening, but could hear nothing. He then crept softly downstairs to the first

floor, and from below heard the sound of three heavy sighs, and he then heard someone walk across the middle room of the first floor very lightly. The listener was then half way down the last pair of stairs, and hardly conscious of his own imminent peril, he actually descended to the bottom, and, the door being a little ajar, he peeped through the opening. A candle was burning on the table, and by it he saw the murderer! He saw a man, apparently nearly six feet high, in a large, rough "Flushing coat," of a dark colour, which reached down to his heels. He was standing with his back towards the horror-struck Turner, and was bending over the body of Mrs. Williamson, whose pockets he was rifling. The witness heard some money rattle, and then the apparition—if one may so term a sentient being—rose and opened his coat with his left hand and put his right hand to his breast, as if he had a pocket there. Turner never saw his face, and he saw no other man. He ran upstairs as silently and as quickly as he could, and at first thought of getting under the bed, but instead took the two sheets, fas-

He was found with his throat cut.

tened them to the bedpost, opened the window, and lowered himself down.

Mr. George Fox gave evidence as to making an entry into the house, and described the position of the victims, and he told how he, Mr. Mallet—the chief clerk of the Shadwell police—and two police officers had proceeded to search a great many houses in consequence of information that two persons of a suspicious character had rushed along Shadwell High Street.

Mr. William Salter, a surgeon, described the mortal character of the injuries, and said that the throats of all the victims had been cut by a razor used with the left hand. Two girls declared that immediately after the discovery two men had run past them, one in a white, rough coat, and the other a short man.

The jury returned a verdict similar to that found in the case of the Marrs, and efforts were renewed to trace the savage being who had destroyed two households. In my next it will be shown how far these efforts were successful.

TO BE CONCLUDED.

A Revengeful Murder.

MATTHEW HENDERSON was the son of honest, hard-working parents, and was born at North Berwick, in Scotland, where he was educated in the liberal manner customary in that country, and brought up in the doctrine of the Christian religion, as professed by the Presbyterians. Sir Hugh Dalrymple, a member of the British Parliament, took him into his service when fourteen years of age, and brought him to London. Before he was nineteen years old he married one of his master's maids; but Sir Hugh, who had a great regard for him, did not dismiss him, though he was greatly chagrined at the circumstance.

Having occasion to go out of town for a few weeks, Sir Hugh summoned Henderson to assist in dressing him, and while he was thus employed, Sir Hugh's lady going into the room, the valet accidentally trod on her toe. She said not a word at the time, but looked at him with a degree of rage that made him extremely uneasy. When Sir Hugh had taken his leave, she demanded of Henderson why he had trod on her toe, in answer to which he made many apologies, and ascribed the circumstance to mere accident; but she gave him a blow on the ear, and declared that she would have him dismissed from Sir Hugh's service. Henderson replied that it would not be necessary to turn him away, as he would go without compulsion; but, reflecting that her anger would soon subside, he continued in his place, and was treated with as much kindness as if the accident had never happened.

He was, however, still smarting under the blow he had received, and began to consider how he could be revenged, and at length came to the fatal resolution of murdering his mistress.

A few nights after he had thus made up his mind the maid-servant went out, after eleven o'clock, to see a relation, taking the key of the street door with her. Her absence gave Henderson, as he thought, a favourable opportunity of carrying his diabolical plan into execution, and, going into the kitchen, he armed himself with a cleaver, and retired to his bed-chamber, where he remained about a quarter of an hour, deliberating whether he should or should not commit the murder. At length he determined that he would have his revenge, and went upstairs as far as the first landing, but his courage failed him or his conscience smote him, and he descended again into his room, where he again sat for some time. He then again went up a part of the stairs, and once more came down, incapable for the present of carrying his dreadful purpose into execution.

Once more he mustered courage to go up as far as the first window, when, hearing the watchman crying the midnight hour, he tripped down a few steps; but, immediately summoning up his resolution, he went up and opened the lady's chamber door, carrying the cleaver in his hand. Approaching the bedside, he found her asleep, but still hesitated on the commission of the crime, and walked across the room in the utmost perturbation of mind. At length he went to the bed again, and struck her violently on the head with the cleaver. On receiving the blow she attempted to get up, when he again struck her, and then heard her say something, but could not catch the words. He then gave her a third blow, on which she exclaimed, "Oh, Lord, what is this?" He now became furious, and rained in a shower of blows till she fell out of bed and the room streamed with blood. Terrified at what he had done, he quitted the room and threw the cleaver into the ash-pit at the back of the house.

He now resolved to add the crime of robbery to that of murder, and, going back to the room, stole some money, jewels, and other valuables, which he carried to his wife's lodgings, put them into a box, and immediately went back. On arriving at the house he found he had shut himself out; but the maid returning soon afterwards, she unlocked the door and they entered together. The maid, observing blood on the floor downstairs, suspected that something had happened, and ran upstairs, where, finding the bloody corpse of her mistress, she ran down again, shrieking and weeping. As soon as it was daylight Henderson went to the nephew of Sir Hugh Dalrymple, and informed that gentleman of the occurrence, on which the maid was taken into custody on suspicion and carried before a magistrate, who, from her answers, had a strong idea that the murder had been committed by Henderson. He was thereupon ordered to be arrested, and a constable was sent off for that purpose, with whom he returned to court very cheerfully. The magistrate examined him with unusual strictness, and found many contradictions in his story, and at length he broke down and confessed that he alone had transacted the murderous business.

He was thereupon committed to Newgate to take his trial at the next sessions at the Old Bailey. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to death.

Whilst awaiting execution he was attended by a Presbyterian minister, and his behaviour was very penitent and contrite. At the place of execution he made a speech, advising servants to be obedient to their masters and to behave with submission instead of harbouring sentiments of revenge.

On February 25, 1746, he was drawn on a sledge to the end of Oxford Street, where he was executed, and his body was afterwards hung in chains on the Edgware Road.

A South African Tragedy.

"One that loved, not wisely, but too well."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Othello," Act V., Sc. 2.

IN the summer of 1880 Cape Colony was stirred to its depths by tidings, flashed over the wires and expanded in the newspaper reports, of a tragic occurrence at East London, the picturesque seaport town built by British settlers on the banks of the Buffalo River, situated at the sea-end of the line of railway, extending then only as far as Queenstown—with bullock-wagon roads and post-cart circuits to Aliwal North, Kimberley, and the Orange Free State—the north-eastern frontier of the Colony.

Cases of murder were frequent among the Kafirs, the fruit of drunken debauch and tribal riot, and the numerous sentences of death at the circuit courts in these cases excited merely passing interest. But this was a "white" tragedy, happily of rare occurrence, the details of which, as disclosed in the local newspapers and subsequently unfolded in the evidence at the trial, invested it with the elements of pathos and romance. It was, indeed, a pitiful story, and the present writer, at that time editor of the leading district newspaper, was naturally involved in its ramifications, so far as these concerned the interest, which was unusually vivid and far-reaching, of the public at large.

Charles Ward, aged 25 years, was an engine fireman, engaged on the harbour works, a sober, steady, industrious young Englishman, of quiet habits, with a reserved manner and many good qualities, indicating the enterprising new colonist, determined to push forward and prosper in his adopted country. He bore an excellent character. During the seven years he had been in the colony he had been employed at the harbour works, where he was certain of promotion, having won the approving notice of his superiors and the heartiest goodwill of his comrades and fellow-workmen.

Ward lived with his uncle and aunt on the Panmure side of the river, and for years past had been the principal means of support and the mainstay of the Perren family. There were numerous children, the eldest, Annie, having developed into the loveliest aspect of budding womanhood at the age of sixteen. With the consent of her parents she was engaged to her cousin, who had watched her grow up, and whose friendship and cousinly regard had ripened into a deep and passionate attachment. The girl was young and volatile; the parents were careless and dissolute, the father addicted to drinking habits, in which his wife shared, both, by tacit allowance, leaving the arduous responsibilities of the household upon the nephew. The burden of domestic expenses, the education of the younger children, and the clothing of his sweetheart in the tasteful raiment that adorned her wonderful beauty, all fell upon his shoulders, and forced him to habitual and unselfish thrift and the utmost prudence of economy. The burden was borne cheerfully, sustained by deep, devoted, passionate love. In the dinner hour he would go round the works and gather into his work-basket the fallen chips and splinters of wood and waste scraps of coal, and when the "knock-off" bell rang these were carried on his shoulder with cheerful alacrity to assist in the home economies. He strove, sweated, pinched for his sweetheart's family with an unselfish loyalty of affection that was truly pathetic.

The beauty of the girl was very striking. Her figure, of average height, had all the pleasing contours of the full-budded maiden rapidly attaining the flowering grace of womanhood. The low-drooping eyelids, veiling soft, dusky brown eyes, were fringed with long, silken lashes, that cast fitful shadows on the oval face, with its clear outline and transparent skin, tinged with apple-blossom. The lovely dint over the upper lip gave relief to a nose which saucily faltered in line, and terminated in nostril curves of artistic expansion. The mouth opened, large and wide, over a tiny reef of gleaming pearl, or closed into a seductive coral rose-bud; while ears of perfect shape and symmetry glistened amid the shades of rich masses of nut-brown locks, with a fleck of gold in their ripples. It was a wonderful beauty, and only needed that nameless something which grows out of breeding, refinement, and subtly-awakened intellect, to be perfect in its kind, to satisfy the most exacting æsthetic standard. But it was alive with youth and health, and had already tasted the sense of power which follows the exercise of unrestrained coquetry.

Alas, poor Annie! The youth of her circle flocked around her, made much of her, flattered her, invited her to picnics and dances, carried her hither and thither, under the nose of her grave and loyal cousin, whose protection and guardianship, whose troth even, she claimed, while she denied him the favours of intimacy and companionship. He was brave and staunch and true; bought all her clothes, supported the household, indulged her extravagances, and only smiled with inward pain as she gaily kissed him good-bye when lightly trotting off to pleasure with other escort. She wore his engagement ring, and prized it in a careless sort of fashion; but, in the light of other suns, she found him grave, cold, and restrained, "not like my Lancelot," and she "yearned for warmth and colour."

The elder Perrens were not averse to these derelictions on the part of their daughter, encouraged the visits of the swains to the house, and found their account in the abundant liquor they paid for. This is the ignoble and sordid side of the story.

One of these admirers, a youth of nineteen, became the constant squire of Annie. His name was Harry Meadows. He was always in the way, a constant source of torture to poor Ward; for ever at the cottage, the week evenings at card parties, from which the unhappy lover was lightly excluded, or with Annie away at dancing parties; and on Sundays always at dinner, and after abroad for a walk down the creek or across the beach with Annie. It was terrible torture, and borne by one to whom the impending loss was as the closing of the gates of life. This Meadows was a worthless, good-for-nothing fellow, working as a mechanic on the railway works, and a veritable coward, as his subsequent conduct proved.

There were frequent quarrels of a stormy character between Ward and the Perrens, father and mother, who promised, in a sullen spirit, to get matters rectified for their benefactor and slave. They affected to smooth matters over, but privately encouraged the unhappy girl to act surreptitiously with her friends, and connived at a species of secret rebellion against the wishes of her affianced husband.

But Ward, though strong and resolute in character, was simple and trusting, believing only what he saw, and generous with the magnanimity of a true, honest nature. He plodded and toiled for the Perrens, and excused all the past to his beautiful sweetheart on the score of her youth and innocence; for he was too wholesome-minded a man to put an evil construction upon her conduct, and, indeed, he was but just, for the poor girl was foolish, but not wicked even in intention. Hers was the evil that is "wrought by want of thought as much as want of heart." Not so, however, can be viewed the action of her parents. The duplicity which they fostered hardened the girl towards her lover, and she grew to think it no ill to deceive him, to laugh at his fondness as troublesome and irksome, and to regard his watchful solicitude as tyranny. She coaxed his forgiveness, swayed his pliancy to her profit, cajoled him of money for finery and trinkets—in short, under the evil influence of her parents, became an adept in deceitful wiles, played off her true lover against her more agreeable male associates, and laughed at him amid their pranks. She carried on her intrigue with Meadows, and went about to dances and junketings with others. Of course, everybody but Ward knew of these goings-on. Something of the whispering about them reached his unwilling ears, but he stopped them promptly with both hands, imputing a little of the scandal to thoughtless ignorance and the rest to spiteful malice, for he was one who

". . . . loved not wisely, but too well,"

until——

One Sunday morning—the fatal day—he spent in happy, innocent dalliance with his sweetheart. They talked gay nonsense together in the kitchen; he leaned over her, his arm encircling her waist, his lips touching her soft brown hair—the lovely hair, with gold sheen in the ripples of it—while she wrote her name against a motto in a friend's birthday book. She laughed softly as she read out the motto:

"Black brows, they say,
Become women best; so and there be not
Too much hair, but in a semicircle,
Or half-moon, made with a pen."

They were not literary, so they both laughed at the oddness of the words, he protesting that there was only brown hair and brown eyes in the world for him, and she archly repudiating his proffered embrace. In the large rocking-chair, to which he carried her with tender violence, she sat passively on his knee, and they hummed snatches of melody in unison. Then they lingered in the little

"No! curse you—get out of this!"

garden, with rude patches of primitive floriculture, containing clumps of tree-like geraniums, vivid with the fire of scarlet blossoms, arums gleaming a white protest, and in the centre a huge cactus spreading its sword-like leaves to the passion-flower which threaded the trellis bordering the shaded stoep. He thought her more beautiful than any flower, and he was right. She was a lovely girl, radiant in the glorious sunshine; he was a strong, fine-hearted fellow, with gnarled hands and firm features, swarthy and sunburnt, who loved her, and he was very happy.

Alas! at midday Meadows came. He stayed to dinner, and openly claimed an appointment to walk on the beach with Annie in the afternoon. When her affianced husband had asked her to walk with him in the morning she pleaded excuses, which he simply admitted. Now she blushed crimson under his indignant frown.

She sat next to Meadows, and Ward, now watchful and suspicious, intercepted glances and passages that took the light out of his day. The brown eyes occasionally vouchsafed him a tender, coquettish glance, but there was the eye-telegraphy between Annie and Meadows, which said as palpably as words, "Hush-sh! don't let him notice anything; he's watching us!"

Ward saw it all, and his soul was dark with misery. He pushed his untasted dinner from him and left the room. He went to his bedroom, which opened off the kitchen, or living room, and threw himself on the bed. It was a fool's paradise, then, which he had been indulging in! From the outer room came sounds of laughter. Meadows, who had brought a bottle of whisky, went into the garden to wait while Annie put on her hat and gloves for walking. The Perrens, mère et père, drank the whisky, while the light-o'-love went walking with Meadows. After their departure the laughter ceased, and the elder Perrens hobnobbed in silence. Presently Mrs. Perren came to Ward with some whisky in a glass, asking him to drink.

"No, curse you! Get out of this!"

Ward's eyes flashed fire, and the eyeballs were "red like blood."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! whatever's the matter, Charlie?" was all the startled woman could mutter, as she retired in her usual slatternly, half-drunken disorder. The elder Perren, shrinking from a quarrel, went to bed, and carried the remainder of the whisky with him.

After an hour or two, about 4.30 p.m., Ward rose, and came into the kitchen, with his hat on, ready for walking.

"Fetch me my gun!" he commanded.

"Oh, dear! Charlie, what for?"

"Never mind—well, I want it. Fetch it, will you, please?" He said this calmly. There was no trace of passion in his look or words. His face was white and drawn, but his eyes were steady and mild in their expression. They dwelt upon Mrs. Perren with kindly sadness, almost tenderly, as he took the gun—a double-barrelled breech-loader—which the bewildered woman, too frightened to resist, produced at his request. He opened the breech, rubbed it with his handkerchief, and, placing the butt on the floor, carefully looked down the barrels. The examination completed, he produced two cartridges, which he had brought from the bedroom, and, placing them in the chambers, carefully locked the breech.

"Good-bye!" he said quietly, and held out his hand to his aunt; "good-bye, mother! You won't see me again."

"Oh, Charlie, what nonsense!" said the woman, half-laughing and half-crying.

"I mean it!" he said firmly. "There must be an end to all this. Good-bye!" And he strode swiftly from the house.

Mrs. Perren, not quite believing in the reality of his purpose, gave no alarm, but comforted herself with tears and a little whisky as she sat in a chair and waited.

Ward, deliberate and fixed in his purpose, with a set, white face, and carrying his gun carefully poised on his shoulder, walked towards the beach. It was a glorious afternoon, and many people, scattered here and there in couples or small groups, were out enjoying the light sea breeze. He walked rapidly, with strong, firm strides, until he reached the centre of the wide common which tops the beach. Here he paused beside a cluster of wacht-en-beetje ("wait-a-bit") thorns, and, wiping his forehead, scanned the distant beach. The rare atmosphere quivered in the sun-rays, which made the calm surface of the Indian Ocean like liquid gold. The few ships in the offing seemed like reposing swans, vividly defined between the transfigured sea-floor and the serene blue of the sky. The air was so soft and fine that the scent of mimosa and the fresh sea odours mingled, or floated separately, and were easily resolvable by the individual senses. The sea lapped the beach lazily, or fitfully broke into snowy ripples over the jagged rocks; the rumble and moan of the distant harbour bar had subsided into a faint under-song. The fisher gulls wheeled indolently over their prey, and a procession of wild duck made a faint black line in the blue above the coast rocks. Everything was beautiful and calm; there was no hint of tragedy in the delightful scene.

Presently Ward started alert beside the thorn trees. Annie and Meadows were coming from the direction of Bats' Cave, a favourite resort of lovers. His arm was around her waist, and he was fanning her with his straw hat under her parasol as they walked leisurely towards the man in ambush. Ward came out into the open and met them. They advanced towards him uneasily, and fell apart with guilty consciousness, but, of course, had no suspicion of his purpose, the gun having only a suggestion of sport for them. They were soon undeceived, however. Ward approached the girl, who divined something from his white face that made her tremble.

"Oh, my! Charlie, what's the matter?" she faltered, starting backward, a sudden fear thrilling her.

"Annie," he said solemnly, "you and I are going to bid each other good-bye to-day. We're going to part here, just

now, for ever. Annie, I want you to kiss me, for you are not going home any more. Will you kiss me good-bye?"

She gave a little hysterical laugh, and looked round for a way of escape.

Here Meadows interposed. "You're not going to do anything rash, Charlie, I hope?" His tongue faltered as he spoke, for he realised something terrible, and he was frightened. He shrank away as the poor girl cried, "Take me home, Harry!"

Ward turned upon him with a fury of contempt. "Go, you sneaking hound! you cur, go! One is enough to have upon my soul; I don't want to soil myself with your dirty blood. But if you don't go sharp, by God! I'll do for you!"

Meadows turned on his heel, stricken with cowardly fear, and never once looked back; but he heard Ward say:

"Won't you kiss me good-bye, dear? Of your own free will, mind!"

The girl embraced his neck frantically, and kissed him repeatedly, prompted by only hysterical fear. Then he thrust her from him, unrelenting in his purpose, and moved slowly off something like fifty paces, facing her all the time. She stood as if rooted to the spot.

"ANNIE, I WANT YOU TO KISS ME; FOR YOU ARE NOT GOING HOME ANY MORE!"

Of a sudden there was a loud report. Meadows looked round for the first time, and saw her lying on the ground, Ward leaning over her and kissing and fondling her. Meadows ran then to raise an alarm, but always in the direction of his own safety.

When Ward first looked up a number of persons, alarmed by the report, were coming towards them. He kissed her once more, carefully smoothed the folds of her dress over her feet, and slowly laid his handkerchief upon her face. She had died instantly, shot through the heart.

He seized his gun, and dashed towards the wire fence round a piece of enclosed ground set apart for building. He took off his bootlace quickly, tied one end of it to the wire, and the other to the trigger of his gun, which he turned towards his head. The charge went wide, and before he could re-load he was seized by strong hands and held till he was passed into the custody of the police. They also took charge of the body of the unfortunate girl. I viewed it subsequently when it lay, awaiting interment, on the stone slab of the gaol mortuary. All its marvellous beauty of outline and contour seem to be accentuated by death. A sculptor would have been ravished by that perfection of form. The eyes were mercifully closed, but the face indicated no passage of storm or conflict or pain or any trouble; its concentrated repose, deepened by a slightly waxen pallor which retained the apple-blossom tinge, and haloed by the lovely soft brown hair, suggested an ethereal smile. Over the left breast someone had laid a bouquet composed of white violets, surrounding a solitary passion-flower.

It is unnecessary here to enter into the details of Ward's trial, from which and from interviews held by the writer with the murdered girl's father and mother and other members and friends of the Perren family, the above facts are elicited. The trial, which created great public interest, afforded no complicated incidents, no mysteries to be unravelled. Ward, who pleaded "Not guilty," was ably defended by counsel, who urged all that could be said in his favour—his good character, his humanity, his protecting goodness to the Perren family, his deep love for his victim, the provocation of her perfidy and infidelity. In summing up, the judge, Sir Jacob Dirk Barry, passed some severe strictures on the cowardly conduct of Meadows, who subsequently found East London too hot to hold him. The jury found the prisoner guilty.

In passing sentence, Judge Barry was deeply moved by his sympathy with the prisoner, and burst into tears when uttering the dread sentence of execution. The judge's mood was contagious; the whole assembly was moved, and many persons were affected to tears. Ward stood erect and calm in the midst of the terrible scene, his face blanched to deathly pallor. But there was no visible perturbation, not the movement of a muscle, as he said quietly, in clear tones, "Thank you, my lord!" before leaving the dock with firm step, like one grateful that the end was near.

Two days before the execution the writer was summoned to an interview with Ward. I went in considerable trepidation of spirit; it was a novel experience in a long journalistic career, and I had some misgiving as to the result. But I was much reassured by Ward's manner. He came to me in the gaoler's office, and met me with a smile that was almost cordial, proffering his hand in a hesitating manner and with

a quick deferential glance of interrogation. I grasped his hand warmly in reply, and a sudden flush of colour in his face expressed a soul-gratitude that made me glad of my response to his mute overture.

"I hope you are not offended at the trouble I caused you by sending, sir?"

I assured him I was not.

"I sent—I took the liberty—because I thought you would not mind, and because I would like you to put right summat for me, sir. It's like this, you see, sir. I'd like you to put into the paper that I was never unkind to 'er in my life—no, not to none on 'em, sir, least of all to her—except that wunst, when I did 'er the 'orful unkindness of takin' 'er precious life." Here his voice broke, and he turned aside to brush the tears away with the back of his hand. I had a lump in my throat, and I dared not look keenly at him. "Well, there," he added quickly, turning to me again, "I won't talk on it; it be too 'ard to be talked about. The past can't be undone, and I be lookin' to the future now. If you'd put in the paper, sir, that I never was 'ard to 'er—oh, no! I'd sooner 'ave cut myself in pieces than ever 'ave 'urted 'er, sir, or caused 'er the least trifle o' pain—I think it would make me easier in my mind, sir, if you'd put that in the paper."

I told him that I believed, and the public also believed, that he had always acted with much manliness towards the poor girl, and with entire goodness and kindness always. I promised to make the statement he desired in the paper, and I did so.

Was there anything more I could do? I felt I would like to get away, and yet I could not hint at impatience. It was not impatience—it was sheer pain. The journalistic instinct to get "copy" had quite deserted me. I could not pry on this wretched man—no vulgar criminal, as I felt in my soul—whose drawn, pale face and sad eyes were only a faint index to the awful depths of suffering within, whose one link with the world outside the walls of the gaol was the thought that the tenderness of his love for the dead girl might be confounded, by imperfect judgments, with the harshness of the crime—this doomed man, who had done with the past and whose future had only two more days of terrestrial life.

"Nothing more, I thank ye, sir," he said in reply to my query; "only I would like to ask to see you at the last, sir."

My reply was another grasp of his hand.

One could not reply, "I shall be there, of course," as if contemplating a picnic rendezvous. And so I left him, until our next meeting on the following Tuesday.

"At the last!" as poor Ward said. There was a crowd of between thirty and forty persons admitted to the execution yard by favour of the sheriff. Most of them were drawn by morbid curiosity, and waited impatiently for the final gruesome scene. They stood on the graves of past malefactors, and before them rose the scaffold, coated with tar, black and ominous, the approaches guarded by Kafir constables, who were drawn up in two lines and calmly waited for the solemn event. The white "gentlemen" showed signs of undignified impatience, or relieved their feelings with unseemly jokes, uttered in loud asides to their companions. The Kafir constables preserved a stolid, decorous silence. At the appointed hour the bell began to toll, and the spectators settled themselves in their places for the "show." They had not long to wait. A black door in the far corner of the yard opened, admitting a man clothed in a black garment, resembling a clergyman's gown, except that the sleeves were open, and the resemblance was accentuated by the tall hat and white tie-bands. The stranger's identity puzzled the spectators exceedingly. But he solved their difficulty by mounting the execution platform and performing a shrewd examination of the hanging noose, the draw-bolt, the stability of the platform, and the clearness of the yawning pit beneath. The stranger was the Colonial hangman! The surprise elicited by the discovery had scarcely found expression when the small black door again opened, and a procession streamed out under the tolling bell. Four constables preceded the head-gaoler, who was followed by the condemned man, pinioned and guarded on either side by a gaoler, the sheriff, the doctor, and the aged parish rector, the Rev. E. Impey, who also did these duties for the Government, bringing up the rear. The grim procession halted some paces from the scaffold, and the head-gaoler, after speaking to Ward, fell into a whispered consultation with the sheriff. The result was that the latter, to my intense surprise, called me by gesture from my place amid the crowd. He explained that the prisoner's request to shake hands with me was granted, subject to my consent. I assented readily, and the arms of the doomed man were unloosed by a gaoler, under the supervision of the executioner. It was a painful business. Ward stepped forward, grasped my outstretched hand, and said in clear, flawless tones, that reached the spectators at the other side of the yard: "Thank ye, sir; and, if you will not mind my saying it, may God bless you!" then stepped quickly back and submitted to the process of being re-pinioned. The office was quickly performed, again under the critical supervision of the executioner, who carefully tested the bonds by a couple of hand pressures. And now, the bell having ceased, the procession again started for the scaffold. In the meantime I had regained my place among the spectators.

Ward mounted the steps of the scaffold unaided, but the venerable clergyman, whose intense grief was visible, was supported, almost carried, to his post on the platform. Ward attended earnestly to his ministrations, and his lips moved in fervent response to the supplication made in broken tones by the clergyman, who, on descending from the scaffold, fainted on the steps, and was quickly borne from the dreadful scene. Ward saw all without a quiver of emotion, and with the same obedience and promptitude he had already displayed attended to the whispered instructions of the executioner, while he placed the cap over his eyes and adjusted the noose to his neck. While Ward was standing in this situation the executioner once more felt the rope with his hands, tried the bolt, surveyed the beam, and scrutinised the pit with cool deliberation, amid a dreadful silence. The spectators shuddered, the Kafir constables remained as rigid as ever, and the doctor waited, with one hand used as an elbow-socket and the other pressed intently against his chin. The stifling tension of the atmosphere was broken by the click of a bolt, immediately followed by the thunderous crash of the falling platform, the downward plunge of the muffled and bound body of a man, which quivered for a moment, then hung passive and rigid in the pit, the chin appearing above the topmost rim. It was all over, and poor Ward had expiated his terrible crime.

THE great affront of giving the lie arose from the words, "Thou liest," in the oath taken by the defendant in judicial combats before engaging, when charged with any crime by the plaintiff.

Bribery Was'nt Blind.

WHEN Sir John Trevor was Master of the Rolls, and a boon companion of the notorious Judge Jeffreys, he was strongly suspected of trafficking in bribes, and gambled and betted heavily. He became Speaker of the House of Commons, as well as Master of the Rolls, and he once had to sit for six hours hearing himself abused, and then to put the motion to the House "whether he (himself) had been guilty of high crimes and misdemeanours." He squinted most abominably, and when he was expelled the House for bribery, a wit remarked that "Justice was blind, but Bribery only squinted."

On one occasion he met Bishop Tillotson, and muttered, loud enough for the learned divine to hear, "I hate a fanatic in lawn sleeves." "And I," retorted the bishop, "hate a knave in any sleeves."

His avarice was well known. One day a Welsh relative was introduced to his room as he was sitting at his wine, whereupon he broke out upon his servant thus: "You rascal, you have brought my cousin, Roderick Lloyd, Esq., Prothonotary of North Wales, Marshal to Baron Price, etc., etc., up my back stairs! Take him down again instantly, and bring him up my front stairs!" During the time the servant was doing this Sir John put away all his wine, so that he would not be obliged to dispense a little to his relation during the visit.

The Coachman's Character.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE MANSFIELD once had a coachman whom he dismissed for some act of peculation, and on the following day the man came to him and begged him to give him a character. His lordship asked what kind of a character he could give, and the coachman replied that he would be thankful for anything that he (the judge) might choose to say, whereupon Lord Mansfield sat down and wrote the following:

"The bearer, John Tom kins, has served me three years in the capacity of coachman. He is an able driver and a very sober man. I discharged him because he cheated me.—MANSFIELD."

The man thanked his lordship and went off. A short time afterwards the judge was on his way to Westminster Hall, when he saw a handsome coach and liveried servants waiting near his house, and was considerably astonished to recognise his late coachman on the box. He went to him and said, "Why, John, you seem to have got an excellent place; how did you manage that with the character I gave you?" "Oh, my lord," replied John, "I found it a most excellent character; my new master, on reading it, said that, as your lordship mentioned that I was an able driver and a sober man—these, said he, were just the things he wanted, and though your lordship said you had discharged me for cheating, said he to me, 'Hark you, sirrah! I'm a Yorkshireman, and I defy you to cheat me.'"

HORNE'S Horrible Career

He ends it at 74 on the Nottingham Gallows.

"There is always something in the misfortunes of even our dearest friends that is not entirely displeasing to us."
—LA ROCHEFOUCAULD, "Maxims."

MOST counties have their own legend of the meanest man that ever saw the light. Men that would spoil a ship for the want of a ha'porth of tar seem to exist, and afterwards to die miserably, just that some writer may point a moral to adorn his tale. In a large town in the Midlands there lived an old miser who used to eat oysters off a stall in a very undignified manner. No matter how excellent such oysters might be, he could not refrain from attempting to get twelve and three-quarters to the dozen. For he would invariably eat three-quarters of one oyster, spit out the remaining quarter of that bivalve, and exclaim, "That's a wrong 'un." Now, the oyster sellers did not like that sort of thing. They put some oysters out in the sun on purpose for that old miser. And they kept them in the sun for several days. By that time there was not the slightest doubt that each and every one of them was a "wrong 'un" with a vengeance. The victim was not going to spit out the first oyster, be it never so poisonous. Somewhere about number eight was the oyster that he regularly jibbed at. He must have eaten four or five bad ones before he found out that a trick was being played on him. He was not charged for the oysters that he consumed. He tried to walk home, but he saw a crawling cab, and took advantage of the local regulations by which he could ride for half fare if he captured a vehicle that was returning empty after completing a journey. The cabman did not love the old miser. Still, he left him at his own house, and remarked, "If I were you, Mr. X., I should send for a doctor." The miser replied, "Well, if I don't feel better by to-morrow morning, I think I shall send out for a ha'porth of castor-oil." To-morrow morning never came. The miser had died of what we now call "ptomaine poisoning." Now, what all this has to do with the subject under discussion hinges on what the cabman said when he heard of the miser's death. His words were, "I suppose he thought he'd chance it, as Old Horne did his neck."

In "Hollow Stone," at Nottingham, or rather in Bellar Gate, looking up Hollow Stone, towards St. Mary's Church, there is a little public-house called "Horne's Castle," named after the infamous brute whose history we are about to tell. He was the eldest son of a Derbyshire county gentleman who owned a considerable property near Butterley, where now there is a foundry, and where coal pits are as plentiful as beerhouses on Portsea Hard.

He was born November 30, 1685, and was taught at home by his father, who was generally believed to be the best classical scholar in England. Young Horne, however, did not take kindly to study. He had as much money as he chose to ask for, and used to go riding about in all directions in search of diversion, not often of an innocent nature. Any maidservant of his mother's soon lost all claim to respectability. But, not content with seducing the poor girls, he must needs go and get some miscreant to murder one of them, just because she was likely to become the mother of a child whose parentage could be laid at his door. Indeed, he signed a written confession to the above horrible deed, and, further, he was made to avow his having ruined his own sisters! A poor man named Amos Killer came to beg at his door. Horne murdered him!

We must digress from telling only of his crimes. His meanness deserves mention. He had two daughters by one unmarried woman. One daughter died at the age of fifteen. The other might have married a man of some substance, who would have settled £30 a year on her, provided Horne would give her a dowry of £50. Horne refused. Contemporary writers speak of this as "incredible meanness." Did we use such an expression, our tale would fain need extra superlatives before its conclusion. His conduct towards his sisters was detestable. Incest of the sort that St. Paul says some of the Corinthian Christians had been guilty of, a vice that even the heathen thought abominable beyond mention, has been laid to the charge of more than one family. The story is that Roundhay Park, near Leeds, was sold to the Corporation at a low price because of some outrageous incestuous scandals that had taken place in the Manor House that is now devoted to the sale of tea and Bath buns.

The ecclesiastical tribunals for the punishment of lewdness and other kindred offences against the law of God have no longer any temporal power wherewith to carry into effect any punishment that in days of old such courts would have thought fitted the crimes, but the good people of Leeds understood all about tar and feathers, and the social pests found the West Riding of Yorkshire too hot to hold them. Mrs. Harriet Beecher-Stowe made ghastly charges against Lord Byron, and there were people in the north of Nottinghamshire who thought that there were horns growing out of the poet's forehead, or, at any rate, that they were sprouting, and that his close moral relationship with Satan was being certified in that preternatural method.

Horne's unfortunate sister was delivered of a fine boy in the month of February, 1724. Horne was its father. Three days after its birth he insisted on his brother Charles going for a ride with him at night. They all lived at Butterley, along with Horne senior, who kept plenty of horses. At ten o'clock at night the pair of blackguards set out for Mr. Chaworth's, at Annesley, about five miles from Butterley, and the unfortunate baby was lying at the bottom of a linen bag, the two men carrying it in turns. When they approached Annesley William dismounted and asked his brother if the child were still alive, and, as Charles replied in the affirmative, William took the babe, telling his brother to wait till he came back. When he returned he told Charles that he had placed the child near a haystack, and had covered it with hay. Now, even supposing that people in the eighteenth century did not know so much about the rearing of children as we fancy we do at the present day, there can be no doubt whatever that William Andrew Horne must have been aware that an infant of three days old would have needed the vitality of a microbe to have survived a February night without a feeding bottle. The child was being murdered, and that in a singularly cruel way. When it was found next morning by one of the cowkeepers on Squire Chaworth's home-farm it was quite dead.

Horne's whining statement made after his conviction is remarkable for its effrontery. He alleged that he had intended the child as a "present for Mr. Chaworth"; he had placed it in a bag lined with wool, with a hole in it to admit the air, and had dressed it well, intending to leave it at the front door of Annesley Hall. But the dogs made such a constant barking that he dare not go near the door for fear of discovery, as there was still a light in one of the windows. So he "did the next best thing." The real motive the heartless brute had was that his own home, Butterley, is in Derbyshire, while Annesley, where George, Lord Byron, many years later, went to try to win Miss Mary Chaworth, lies across the border, inside Nottinghamshire.

Now we shall soon get some insight into the character of Master Charles, the cadet of the gentle house of Horne, a young man who would succeed to the property could the elder brother be got rid of. Very soon he had a bit of a quarrel with his brother, so he told their father about the Annesley Park baby mystery. But he got no change out of the old gentleman, who ordered Charles never to allude to the subject again. And he never did allude to it until his father's death in his 102nd year, Anno Domini 1747, twenty-three years after the commission of the crime. Charles had his bit of trouble, for he was tried for some outrageous offence against human and Divine law at Derby, but his sister Nancy refused to give any evidence that should lead to his conviction, so he was acquitted. As William Andrew Horne said to the clergyman when he was under sentence of death:

"His life was preserved to hang me, but you have not seen the last of him yet. I forgive all my enemies, even my

Brother Charles. But if at the Day of Judgment God Almighty should ask me how he behaved, I would not give him a good character."

Does not La Rochefoucauld's maxim seem to apply closely to the state of feeling in the mind of Brother Charles? He had no chance of coming in for the property while his father survived, and during that time, had he caused the arrest of his brother, the father would have disinherited him. But on the death of the old man he took an opportunity of seeing a Derby attorney on "parish business." That pressing matter soon gave way to telling about the Annesley affair. The man of law referred him to a magistrate. So he went and made a full disclosure to a neighbouring justice, who told him to be quiet about it, for the affair was of such long standing that he might hang half the family as being accomplices before or after the fact. Charles "blew the gaff" all over the country-side. At last he was, or said he was, ill of a flux, and determined to make a "dying deposition," in order to hang his brother; so he sent for Mr. John White, of Ripley, not many miles away, telling him that he was a dying man, and that he could not comfortably go out of this world without telling of the murder and incest. Mr. White said the matter was so delicate that he did not know what to advise. Imagine Mr. White's disgust at seeing Charles Horne out and about a few days afterwards, with the impudence to declare that his recovery was attributable to his having "got the load off his conscience." Charles got no assistance from Mr. White.

Then comes an instance of the truth of the proverb that those who live in glass-houses should not throw stones. William Horne had not common sense enough to refrain from kicking up a fuss when either a neighbour or a tenant, a Mr. Roe by name, had killed some game that was Horne's. A dispute arose in a public-house, and Roe called Horne an "incestuous old dog." It was a fine thing to be a lawyer in those days. Horne took Roe before the Ecclesiastical Court at Lichfield, and as Roe could not prove his words, he was cast in costs. But Roe soon heard that Charles Horne had informed other people that William Horne had starved his poor little natural child to death, and on asking Charles about it, that Stiggins repeated his story to Roe, who about Christmas, 1758, applied to a magistrate who lived at Alfreton, Derbyshire, for a warrant for Horne's apprehension, that the truth might be revealed about the events that occurred in Annesley Park in February, 1724, more than thirty-five years previously. The warrant was granted, but as the justices did business on Mondays only, the village constable at Butterley took Horne's word for his appearance next Court day.

William Horne sent for his brother Charles, and made him lavish promises as to what he would do if Charles would only perjure himself and get him off. Charles refused to be squared to the extent of perjuring himself, but said: "Considering your behaviour to me, I have no reason to expect any favour from you. But, as you are my brother, if you will give me five pounds to carry me to Liverpool, I will immediately embark for another land."

MRS. HORNE OPENED THE CHEST.

As they tell the story to this day at Annesley, "Owd Horne thowt thet theer fiver 'ood be havin' litters o' poops abart twiced a moonth," and human nature has not altered so much but that the collier folk's opinion is very plausible. Let a man once submit to being blackmailed, and there is no knowing when the demands upon his purse will end. Horne replied in the historic words: "I'll chance it."

The Derbyshire magistrate thought the whole thing to be very dirty business, and washed his hands of it. But about March, 1759, a Nottinghamshire magistrate granted a warrant for Horne's apprehension. This warrant was endorsed by Sir John Every, a Derbyshire magistrate, and at about 8 p.m. the Annesley constable went to Horne's house at Butterley, and knocked at the door; but was refused admittance. He went back to Annesley, but returned next morning, and was told by the man-servant that Mr Horne had gone from home. Now, all night there had been a watch kept on the house by Mr. Roe and two others He appears to have been more than a "good hater," does Mr. Roe. Indeed, there was something Satanic about the manner in which he seemed determined to "get his own back," with reference to the costs incurred before the Eccle-

siastical Tribunal at Lichfield. Even did such courts still have any temporal power at all, their bills of costs would be less nowadays than they were at that time, for bishops are more plentiful. There would needs be no going to Lichfield nowadays. Southwell would be the venue, and Southwell is no more than about a dozen miles from Butterly or Annesley. Roe was indeed persevering. In vain did Mrs. Horne say that a certain large chest contained nothing but table-linen and sheets. Roe was for smashing it up, but Mrs. Horne opened it, and Horne blurted out, "It is a sad thing to hang me. My brother Charles is as bad as I am, and he can't hang me without hanging himself."

Horne was examined before a couple of Nottinghamshire county magistrates, who gave his case a lengthy hearing. He had not much to say in his defence, so he was committed to the County Gaol at Nottingham to await his trial at the Assizes. He speedily made an application to the Court of King's Bench to be removed by writ of habeas corpus, in order to be bailed. For this purpose he was taken to London in the custody of a gaoler. The Court of King's Bench, however, refused his request, and Horne again became a guest of the County Gaol. On August 10, 1759, he was tried before Lord Chief Baron Parker. The hearing of the case occupied nine hours. Somehow or other the prosecution seems to have discovered the very persons who found the child's body at Annesley, in 1724. There is fresh air and pure water in Annesley Park. Folks live long there. Coals could be bought almost for the asking, wood could be gathered for the fetching, Squire Chaworth's gamekeepers did not grudge the poor man a couple of rabbits when he wanted them. Bread sometimes was dear, and money was none too plentiful. But the parish records would be able to prove that the men who said they had been employed on the home farm at Annesley in February, 1724, were still alive. And though the exciting times of the Young Pretender's period had not been without their effect in the lives of Derbyshire folk, yet when these intelligent rustics confirmed the statements of Charles Horne, it was pretty plain that the prisoner had one chance only left him, namely, that there would be a weak-kneed juryman, whose disapproval of capital punishment would induce him to return a verdict of "Not Guilty" in every murder trial.

No such luck awaited Horne.

After half an hour's deliberation the jury brought in a verdict in accordance with the evidence, and the Lord Chief Baron sentenced him to be hanged on the Monday following. On the evening of the trial the judge granted one month's respite, and at the end of the month the prisoner obtained another respite, postponing the carrying out of the sentence to an indefinite period. Fruitless applications were made to influential persons to use their power with the Government on his behalf; but it was evident that a man who had had so many opportunities of getting clean away, as Horne must have had during his sinful career, had surely had as much of this world's good luck as he could reasonably expect to come his way. He seemed to show no penitence. He thought that the long interval between his crime and his trial should have been ample palliation. He was hanged on Gallows Hill, which is just before one reaches the first milestone out of Nottingham on the road to Mansfield. The site of the gallows is now inside the church cemetery.

How many suffered there it is hard to say. Until 1826 the drainage of the Long Row at Nottingham was carried into a "sough" in the middle of the Great Market Place. This insanitary state of things continued until it was resolved to fill up the "sough" with new red sandstone taken from Gallows Hill. Among the new red sandstone there were dug up fifteen skeletons of executed criminals, which were interred elsewhere more or less decently.

The "Bulwell House" beer tavern, which stood at the corner of the Mansfield Road and Forest Road, has lost its licence, and has been converted into shops. This house had the reputation of being the place where every criminal on his way to Gallows Hill was given his last quart of porter, and one criminal, who would be hanged five minutes later, blew the froth off "because it wasn't wholesome." But this story is also told of the sign of the "Filho da Puta" (now the "Rose of England"). What the name of this house was in the days before Filho da Puta won the Doncaster St. Leger we could no doubt find out if we consulted Mr. Ishmael Wilson, the amusing criminological printer, of York Street, Nottingham. It is highly improbable that Horne drank anything so vulgar as stout. Brown brandy, and plenty of it, was, in all probability, his stirrup-cup for his last ride.

He was driven to Gallows Hill by his own coachman. His hair was as white as salt, and it streamed mournfully in the wind, making him look a very wicked old sinner. He wore no hat. He was in an open carriage, and the day was tempestuous. There was an immense crowd of spectators, including many of his neighbours and tenantry (or, rather, his brother Charles's tenantry) from Derbyshire. He told people that he had always been in the habit of having a plum-pudding for dinner on his birthday, and that he would have had one that day had he only obtained another reprieve. It is hard to find the right word for his mental and moral condition when he met his fate. He showed considerable physical courage, and yet he disliked dying as much as any man in rude health. For want of a better expression, we will say that he died like a philosopher, quietly surrendering to superior force rather than obeying the law of the land.

His corpse was taken to the County Hall for dissection, and it is stated that it was afterwards exposed to public view in a building that stood on the site of the public-house, "Horne's Castle," which was known a century back as "Old Horne's Hall." If such a statement be true, it is the only connection that there is between the old scoundrel and the public-house. It must not be thought that "Horne's Castle" was the place where Horne during his lifetime used to set the law at defiance. His wicked deeds were done on the borders of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and he thought he was doing something clever in getting his poor little victim's body moved into a neighbouring county. Had he not tried to be so "clever," he might have died in his bed rather than in his boots.

There is a general idea that in those days there were fewer people to find out a murder than there are at present. Such is far from being the case. The migration from the country villages into the towns was beginning more than a hundred years ago. Indeed, in all probability the English rural population was about at its maximum in the days of our narrative. So one would imagine that many hundred people must have heard of Horne's outrageous conduct. The legal saw has it, "Nulla mora occurrit regi"—i.e., "There is no limit to the time that may elapse before proceedings be taken against an offender." In other words, a culprit is always in peril until he has "thole his Assize," as the Scots say, or has died. But an easy-going bench of magistrates, such as the Derbyshire Solons of the eighteenth century, lessen the danger considerably.

It Was in the Bond.

THREE pirates had amassed a large sum of money, and they resolved to retire to a strange town and live honestly and as respectable citizens for the future. They could not, however, agree as to the best and safest means of depositing their money, but at last they decided to leave it with a banker, getting from him an undertaking that he would not deliver up a farthing of it unless in the presence of all three. A short time afterwards, one of them, more cunning than the others, persuaded them to buy land, build a house, and live together in common. One day the other two instructed the first to go to the banker and get some money from him with which to pay an instalment due to the builder, and the artful rogue drew all the cash and decamped with it. The others threatened to sue the banker for the whole amount, and he consulted an eminent lawyer of the time, one Gellius Aretinas, who advised him as follows: "Go and tell these men that you are quite willing to repay them according to your undertaking when all three are there to demand it, as the agreement specified." But as they heard no more of the defaulting companion, so the banker heard no more of the threatened action.

Curran's Experiment.

CURRAN often told how his boyish zeal to overcome an adversary by dint of courage and ingenuity met with a never-to-be-forgotten reverse. When he was a boy, he and his companions had a firm conviction that anybody, by merely throwing the skirts of his coat over his head, stooping low, and creeping or waddling backwards, might frighten the fiercest dog and put him to flight. He and some other boys had planned the robbing of an orchard which was guarded by a fierce mastiff, and Curran's confidence and championship were enlisted for a great experiment of this infallible experiment. Curran relates that, "I pursued my instructions, and as I had no eyes save those in front, I fancied that the mastiff was, after his first perplexity, in full retreat. But I was confoundedly mistaken, for at the very moment I thought myself victorious the enemy attacked my rear, utterly regardless whether it was the head or tail of the strange monster so long as he could get a reasonably good mouthful out of it. And he was fully prepared to repeat his meal, had I not fortunately been rescued. I thought for a time the beast had devoured my whole centre of gravity, and that I should never have a chance of resuming a steady perpendicular again."

The Murder of JULIE DUMAS.

"Say that the hope is not in vain,
The hope, the strong desire;
We rise from promissory pain
And purgatorial fire."

—"Odes and Elegies" by RANDALL CHARLTON.

NO. 22, Rue de Chantre, in the city of Paris, might with truth be described as the House of Murder.

Throughout the greater part of the last century it provided a habitation for unfortunate women, and was the scene of several sordid tragedies. In 1823 a girl of the town was slain there by her lover, a man named Debacher, and, although fatalities of greed and passion were common to the house, this crime remained for years the most notorious of the many tragedies connected with No. 22, Rue de Chantre, until it was superseded in 1850—twenty-seven years afterwards—by the crime we are here about to narrate.

The House of Murder, at the time of which we write, viewed from the exterior, owned somewhat a dingy and squalid appearance. The steps were dirty, the windows none too clean, and the walls in several places had fallen into unchecked decay.

On the second floor the windows were tastefully curtained with little white blinds, a canary bird hung up high in a round cage gave an air of homeliness to the place, and a few flowers added scent and beauty to their isolated environment, and bore token of gentleness and refinement.

Desolate the environment certainly was, for the first floor of No. 22, Rue de Chantre was dirty and neglected; the third floor likewise, and the top rooms and attics had the appearance of having been uninhabited for the last twenty-five years.

The truth was, however, that each of these miserable-looking dens harboured some unfortunate creature who lay through the day in drunken torpor on a filthy pallet, and only when twilight crept over the town stirred from supine inertia into activity and crept out into the night. If women, to ply an unnameable calling! if men, to pick up what stray fortune came in the way of their dishonest hands! But the second floor stood out as an oasis of refinement in the murky desert of squalor and sordid neglect that obtained on all sides.

These windows have for us a decided interest; they stimulate curiosity, they suggest a mind not entirely dead to the better things in life, a being whose thoughts have not been irrevocably exiled from the kingdom of sweetness and light. And, indeed, these suggestions are earnests of the truth, for Julie Dumas, the inhabitant of the second floor at No. 22, Rue de Chantre, was not born into the world with a blind heart, had not from her earliest childhood, as many of her unhappy sisterhood had done, attained naught but a low, dead level of profligacy and crime; but, on the other hand, had been so pressed by circumstances, so fooled by malignant chance, that she had gradually slipped from the decent altitude of her youth, had lost her foothold, and, struggling vainly, but still struggling, had gradually fallen into her present wretched condition.

Yet she was not entirely lost, as the fresh flowers, the carefully-curtained windows, and the singing bird testify. A poor tattered remnant of her former self still existed, unsubmerged by the waters of iniquity that have sucked down into their Stygian tides so many human souls.

Her soul had not entered into the realms of eternal night, though in truth it had long departed from the clear light of day, and for this reason she is well fitted to be the central figure of a tragic romance.

Her soul was in the twilight: the twilight that gives to purgatory its strange tragical beauty—the twilight inhabited by spirits that look down in terror on the abysmal depths of hell, and yet gaze up to the pure and beckoning constellations of heaven, with a hope that will not die.

Let us tell the story of Julie Dumas: the adventures of an erring soul in a human purgatory.

Julie was born of good Catholic parents in a small provincial town of France, in the early autumn of 1825. Her father owned a small shop, in which her mother served, and in which she was promised, when grown to years of discretion, she should also take her part. This shop, wherein everything could be had for a moderate sum, from cheese to tobacco, appeared to the child Julie as the most wonderful and most desirable place in the whole world. She was frequently wrapt in astonished bewilderment at the acute genius of "papa," when she observed him apportioning to each customer his just amount of goods for the money paid down, to the fraction of a sou.

Papa Dumas always boasted that he had never made a farthing's profit by dishonest means, which statement his wife invariably corroborated with a confirming nod of her head, and Julie was strictly enjoined to act by her parent's admirable example. All went well in the little shop until one day papa Dumas died, and was buried with much weeping and mourning in a quiet little churchyard lying on the outskirts of the town. After the good man's demise trade fell off, the widow was "hard of hearing," and slow in serving, so that many customers took their money to other markets.

Things being thus, it was but natural that Julie was promoted by her mother to the office of shop assistant at an age when, under more favourable circumstances, she would have been diligently spelling out her tasks at school.

Julie in the shop proved a great attraction. The young men of the neighbourhood discovered that she was beautiful, and accordingly thronged round her on all possible occasions. In this way the girl learnt many things which she should never have known; got her pretty head stuffed with fine notions—as the phrase goes—and grew proportionately vain and foolish. At fifteen she was a woman.

One incident that occurred to her whilst she was at home is of such general interest that it is worthy of recounting. She was sitting behind the counter one afternoon, sewing ribbons on a bodice, when a tall stranger walked in, and, with a Parisian bow, inquired for her father. The stranger was evidently a person of some quality, was elegantly attired in the height of fashion, but for all that had too histrionic an air to pass for a gentleman. He was very dark, had thick lips and black, bushy hair, carried a curious stick, and walked and talked with a swagger that would have appeared impertinent had it not been redeemed by his good-natured countenance and merry laugh.

"My father is dead, sir," said Julie, casting down her eyes with a demure look.

"Hum, that is unfortunate."

"Did you know him, sir?"

"No, I had not that honour."

"Why did you wish to see him?"

"I observed over the shop that he owned my name. I wished to see if we were relations."

"Indeed, sir, and what might your name be?"

"Alexandre Dumas. I write books. You may have heard of them, little one."

Julie turned scarlet with pride. For the last year she had done little but pore over the books of the celebrated novelist, and now he was standing before her, conversing as though he was no more than an ordinary man.

"I have read all your books. They are the finest ever written."

"You like them, mademoiselle? Then I have not written in vain."

The famous writer, who was as greedy of approbation as a girl, himself talked for some little time, presented Julie with gold pieces to buy herself bon-bons with, and walked out with a smile, and then straightway forgot all about the matter.

Julie and her mother remembered it to their last hours. One does not talk with the author of "The Three Musketeers" every day.

As Julie grew in years she likewise grew in beauty, and this, she soon discovered, gave her a power over men, and she used that power with little discrimination. Whilst she was fifteen her mother died, and she was left in the world

with no relatives and very little money. The shop was advertised for sale, and was bought by a man named Marmont, who offered Julie the position of shop assistant. This she accepted for a stated salary, and would have been happy enough had not Marmont, a man of three times her age, started to pester her with abominable suggestions and advances. Old Marmont had a son named Louis, and he, after seeing Julie three times, fell down on his knees and swore that he loved her.

The girl hated the father, but liked the son, and accordingly she persuaded the latter to rise from his romantic position and not be foolish, recalling to his mind that he was already engaged to his cousin.

This cousin was a girl named Marie Meline, who, having no parents, lived with her uncle Marmont, to whose son Louis she was betrothed.

From the first moment that she set eyes on her Marie conceived a fierce and uncompromising hatred for Julie, and the strife of bitter enmity between the two girls continued with unabated vigour until it culminated in the final scene at No. 22, Rue de Chantre. Marie was an ugly girl, who had little or no attention paid to her by young men. She

"You are a murderer!" screamed Marie.

loved Louis, who had sought her hand (more for the respectable dowry she possessed than for herself) with a passionate, all-absorbing affection. He was the only lover she had ever known, the only man who had ever held her in his arms and pressed his lips to hers; the only man who had taught her the joy of living, and it was but natural that when she first saw Julie and observed her beauty she regarded it with fear, as a menace to her happiness with Louis.

Every day affairs in the little house became more complicated. Louis grew colder and colder in his demeanour to Marie, and more openly ardent in his conduct to Julie. The heart of his promised wife flamed and raged with jealousy. Frequently it was with the utmost difficulty that she restrained herself from weeping in company. Every movement of Louis she watched with loving discernment. She saw his face light up with pleasure on Julie entering the room; she saw him literally trembling at the beautiful girl's approach, and she saw him listless, unsatisfied, and inert when alone with herself. Often she felt a fearful desire to strangle her rival and to batter the calm, sweet face until the last traces of loveliness were obliterated.

And all this time Old Marmont pursued his own devices, and pestered Julie continually with his importunities, which grew bolder and more pronounced every day. Julie, the centre of all these jarring elements in the Marmont household, was driven nigh to distraction by the constant scenes of which she was the innocent cause.

Louis would seek her out alone, pour forth his frenzied love, clasp her in his arms, and oblige her to submit to his caresses.

Marie would succeed him and force her to listen to a stream of insult and abuse. At times they nearly came to blows.

"Ah, I see your game! Do not think that you are unobserved. You are a wicked, designing woman!" Marie would scream in her ear when they were alone.

"I do not understand you, mademoiselle," Julie would answer, with a sweet smile.

"You would steal my Louis from me!"

"Good heavens! I would not have him at a gift!"

"You lie!"

"Thank you. You are polite."

"Bah! You are fit for nothing but the streets! You would look well in a circus," etc., etc.

And so the wrangle would go on until Old Marmont would come down, send Marie away, and inquire of Julie, with a leer, if she loved him. This latter was the most trying ordeal of all, for the old man would pull the girl on to his knees, insist on kissing her, and mouth pretty phrases with an elephantine grace and humour.

Often and often Julie wished to fly from it all, but where could she go to? What could she do? She was too pretty to have any friends amongst her own sex, too pretty to find anything but lovers amongst men. She was aware of this, and dreaded the prospect of being alone in the world, and at the mercy of its passions, laws, and arbitrary traditions. But things in the Marmont household could not continue at the present tension. An explosion sooner or later was bound to come; it occurred in the following manner.

Old Marmont secretly forced his way into Julie's private apartment, and by his abominable conduct violated the contract of protection which is extended by any man in whom gleams a spark of honour to all persons who abide under his roof. Louis was, of course, unaware of his father's bestial behaviour, but noticed that Julie became strangely silent and sorrowful in demeanour. She repulsed all his advances with redoubled vigour, and was discovered twice by him weeping when she thought she had been alone and unobserved.

Marie, with a woman's intuition, became more suspicious than ever, and from the appearance of Julie rapidly divined the truth. Upon which she rushed to Louis and accused him of being incontinently intimate with Julie Dumas. A lively scene followed. Louis, who was innocent of any such act, swore roundly that Marie was mistaken, but finally became convinced in turn, whereupon he rushed to his father and charged him with the guilt.

Old Marmont denied any knowledge of the fact, and, to screen himself, suggested that Louis was the culprit, and Marie, stung to madness with jealousy, renewed her vilifications of the young man.

Louis, who knew that his father was lying, told him so in plain terms, and angry words ensued, followed by blows. In a delirium of rage old Marmont seized a chair, and, striking Louis on the head, knocked him senseless to the ground.

Seeing his son stretched apparently lifeless at his feet, the old man became half-demented with rage, terror, and remorse.

"You are a murderer!" screamed Marie. "You shall certainly die for this!"

In the midst of this fearful *fracas* Julie rushed into the room, attracted by the noise and the shouting.

Marie flung herself upon her with the rage of a fury, and the girls fought and struggled with the strength and ferocity of tigresses. We will not pursue the scene.

That night Julie was expelled from the Marmont household.

She found herself in the streets with a few pounds in her pocket and not a friend in the world. Moreover, she was shortly expecting a child.

Old Marmont had become frightened that his infamy would be made public, and also that his son would lose Marie's dower. He had, therefore, expelled Julie, and calling the neighbours together, informed them that he had discovered her to be a dangerous woman of loose morals, and that she had tried to blackmail him and his family.

So it was that Julie was cast on the pavements of her native town, a social pariah, with every door closed in obdurate virtue against her knock. Remembering her pitiable condition it is easy to understand the girl's ignominy and

misery, and not hard to appreciate her conduct when she went forthwith to the railway station and bought a ticket for Paris, of which city she had always heard as an elysium of gold-fretted streets, where everyone was rich and happy.

Poor little dreamer! You have already learnt some part of the lesson of life, you have already found beauty a curse and joy but fleeting! Truly, you are very proficient in knowledge for your years, but you have yet much to experience and much to learn; the world shall prove a hard taskmaster, under whose tuition you shall grow learned in sorrow, a veritable graduate in woe!

Julie Dumas arrived in Paris and found that the streets were not fretted with gold, and that everybody there was not rich and happy.

Her few pounds sustained her for a short time, but gradually dwindled, and at the same time the girl was unsuccessful in all her many efforts to obtain work. People were shy of taking a provincial into their employment, who had neither friends nor references. The men she met in the streets cast friendly glances at her, but Julie was too frightened to regard these advances with any feelings save of apprehension.

When all her money was gone, and she was on the brink of starvation, a woman of the town, attracted to sympathy by the child's pitiable plight, took her to her lodgings and kept her there for some weeks.

This woman, although kindly in disposition and easily moved to pity, exhibited no shame whatsoever as to her wretched calling, and when Julie's child had been born (it died a few years after birth) advised the girl to adopt the same dreadful calling pursued by herself.

We will not enlarge upon Julie Dumas's descent into degradation; suffice it to say that the process of demolition which took place in her soul was gradual and provocative of much suffering, regrets, and vainly-shed tears.

She had been three years in Paris when she first took up her quarters at No. 22, Rue de Chantre.

There, as we have said, she occupied the second floor, where the windows were so tastefully curtained, where the flowers bloomed, and where the canary bird sang his songs in the morning.

By the keeper of the house and by all her fellow-lodgers the refinement of Julie, her evident desire to make her poorly-furnished apartments as pretty and fresh as possible, was regarded as the remnants of a nature inherently foolish.

"What waste of money!" said one.

"Ah, she will tire of it presently. Absinthe and sleep, they all come to it in time, the only things worth anything in this life," added another, a woman with a consumptive cough and a face like a death's head.

But strangely enough Julie persisted in her love for the better things in life; she sank, she wasted, she suffered, but still she never acknowledged absinthe and sleep as the joys of living. We all of us seek our separate nepenthe, our drugged Nirvana from the hideousness of reality; some go to prayers, others to revelry; some seek the cup, and others the song; in the case of Julie her nepenthe was found in small acts of grace; the growth of a rose, the fall of a muslin curtain, and the voice of a bird consoled her in some small part for the horror of her condition.

"I AM HIS WIFE, AND I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!"

Thus she lived, and thus she died.

We must hurry on to the final tragedy that was to crown her short life. We must, therefore, for a brief space retrace our steps. When Louis Marmont recovered consciousness from the blow delivered by his father, he found himself in bed with wet bandages wrapt around his aching head. He asked for Julie, and was told that she had departed. Straightway he fell into a raging fever, and had to be forcibly confined to his bed.

When after several days he was able to once more walk abroad he found it impossible to discover any traces of the missing girl.

All those people of whom he asked information fired at him volleys of abuse and advice.

What did he mean by interesting himself in such a hussy? It was plain he was after no good!

Louis turned from the moralisers in disdain. However, after a great deal of fruitless searching he abandoned the quest of Julie as vain, and returned to his father and the shop.

Time, to a person of Louis's temperament, always proves

an efficacious healer of sores. Time healed his head and mended his heart.

After a year had passed he thought little more of Julie, became once more betrothed to Marie, who was ready to forgive anything so long as her lover returned to her arms and settled down into the quietly domesticated character he had been before Julie had entered his life and set fire to his emotions with her beauty.

Papa Marmont died in due course, was generally mourned, and interred with great ceremony, as so honest and self-respecting a personage certainly deserved to be, by his inconsolable relations. Louis sold the shop and married Marie Meline, upon whose dowry, coupled with his own and his deceased father's savings, he found he could live very comfortably.

The young people removed to Paris, on the outskirts of which city they took a little villa, grew cabbages, went out for picnics, and reared an occasional child.

All would have gone well in a lazy, comfortable sort of way had not Fate decreed—as the discerning reader has doubtless foreseen—that Louis and Julie should meet again. They met one evening at the corner of the Rue de Chantre, and both recognised each other in a moment. Julie was at great pains to conceal her condition in life from Louis, for whom, although she felt no love, she had, as a friend of her happier days, a certain respect.

Louis went home that evening firmly pursuaded that Julie was a dressmaker and conscious that his heart was bounding with an exultant joy, such as he had never experienced since he had last seen her, years ago, in the little provincial town in the South of France. He insisted on visiting the girl, and kept these visits from his wife's knowledge, who was as jealous and ugly as ever.

After a time Julie's deception was discovered, and Louis was horrified to know the life she was leading, and towards which he recognised she had been impelled by the villainy of his father. He gave her all the money he could, insisted upon her accepting it, and asked only in return that she should, as far as was possible, abide in the paths of decency.

But a jealous woman has a suspicious eye, and Marie became convinced that Louis was squandering his affections on some other woman than herself. Tortured by this thought, she employed agents to follow him, from whom she learnt that he was constantly in the company of a loose woman who resided at No. 22, Rue de Chantre, and whose name was Julie Dumas.

Marie for a time was rendered half mad by this news.

Julie Dumas, whom her husband had long forgotten, and whom she had hoped had long been dead, to again rise upon the horizon of her life, a beautiful, evil shadow that obscured the sun of her happiness and drove her to despair!

So fearful was the passion possessing the woman that she became a wonderful adept in cunning; successfully hid her knowledge from Louis, and plotted and planned in secrecy a dread and terrible revenge. The methods she adopted in carrying out her design of vengeance were so astounding that had we not in our possession the most unimpeachable evidence as to her conduct, we should have rejected the narrative as spurious.

Shortly after the events we have chronicled Julie Dumas received a letter from an unknown personage, pertaining to come from a gentleman of position, wishful of making her acquaintance. The girl met the writer of this epistle, whom she had never seen before, a slightly-built young man, dressed in a grey tweed suit, who from his manners and conversation she took to be an artist.

The gentleman accompanied the girl home, and what occurred there shall be told in his own words:

"When we got into the room I was surprised at the creature's taste in arranging her pictures and flowers. The place, although poor, looked really beautiful. I never hated her more than at that moment. She found she had no wine, so I gave her some money, and she went out to get a bottle of claret.

"Whilst she was gone I pulled the knife out, opened the blade, and slipped it up my sleeve ready for use. She returned, and we drank the wine together. I pretended to be jealous of the man who was always visiting her, and asked her who he was. She said an old friend, who had married an ugly woman for her money, but who really loved her. 'Oh, the foul beast! how gladly I could have drawn the knife across her throat whilst she was speaking! She got up with a smirk, and showed me a trinket he had given her. It was the beautiful silver snuff box I gave Louis on his last birthday. She kept her earrings in it.

"'What is this man's wife like?' I asked her, with a smile. She said very ugly. 'Anything like me?' I said, and moved near the light.

"She gave a little cry and looked frightened. In a moment I plucked the wig from my head, and let my hair fall down. She screamed; I caught her by the throat so tightly that she could not cry, and spat in her face.

"'Do you know who I am?' I asked. 'I am his wife, and I am going to kill you!'

"I pulled out the knife with one hand, and showed it to her. 'Oh, Mother of God, have mercy!' she cried. The perspiration rolled from her brow, and her neck, which I held in a vice, was cold and clammy. I drove the knife into her bosom, and when I saw the blood come out could have laughed for joy. I spat in her face again. Then I think I went mad. I hacked and hewed at her face for over half an hour. Oh, she did look a fine beauty when I had done with her! Afterwards I washed my hands, did up my hair, and went home. Louis was asleep in bed, and he died without ever knowing the truth."

The above is taken from the deathbed confession of Marie Marmont, taken down twelve years subsequent to the crime, which for long was considered as one of the unfathomable mysteries so frequent in the annals of Parisian crime.

They have all been dead years now, so there is no harm in telling the story. Louis, Marie, the murderess, and Julie Dumas have long ago resigned their bodies to the great mother of all—Mother Earth; but had we been gifted with the visionary powers of the immortal Florentine, our steps would have led us into that spiritual region that lies between hell and heaven. There, we make little doubt, we should have met the unhappy girl around whose life so much of misery, despair and tragedy was interwoven; there we make little doubt, as in that minor purgatory we call the world, we should have seen her with the abysmal terrors of hell frowning beneath her and the constellated orbs of eternal bliss shining above her head, and as the long duration of her exorcism lessened, we hope (and what hopes are entirely vain?) she would be seen drawing nearer and nearer to the stars!

Extraordinary Ingratitude.

DR. GLOVER, a well-known Irish surgeon, who had a large and lucrative practice in Cork about the year 1766, once expressed his confidence to some brother medicos in his ability to restore a hanged man to life, and on one of his hearers expressing his doubts on the point, Dr. Glover said he would bet him £100 that he would do it. The bet was accepted, and after some difficulty and delay, the body of a highwayman, who had been sentenced to death at the Cork Assizes and duly hanged, was obtained a few minutes after being cut down. The Doctor at once set to work, and very soon succeeded in bringing the man round. He gave him a good meal, slipped a guinea into his hand, and dismissed him with the remark, "Keep out of the clutches of the law in future, my man." The doctor with whom Glover had made the bet, was, of course, present when the experiment was made, and, after the man had departed, he paid over the hundred pounds that he had lost, and that being done the matter dropped and both of them thought that the business had ended. But the subject of their experiment was of a different way of thinking. On the following day he presented himself at the doctor's house, claimed him as a second father, and pointed out that it was his duty to provide for one whom he had brought into life. The doctor was dumbfounded at the peremptory manner of his adopted "son," and, though he had him summarily ejected from the house, the persistent fellow followed him to the theatre and addressed the audience from the gallery, thrust himself into all the places where the doctor visited, called on his patients, went to the hospitals, visited all the medical men in the city, and told them the story of his resuscitation, asking at the same time if they (his hearers) did not think he was entitled to a settlement for life. The wretch so worked upon the doctor that he eventually was obliged, for his own peace of mind, to provide him with a large sum of money, and ship him off to one of our colonies.

The Law Respecting the Stealing of Gooseberries.

OLD "Steady" Baker, the Mayor of Folkestone, once had a boy brought before him on a charge of stealing gooseberries. His worship turned over the leaves of "Burn's Justice," which was at that time the repository of all knowledge of the justice of justices, but was both surprised and annoyed to find that there was no article relating to the stealing of gooseberries in the alphabetical index at the end of the book. He at last lifted his spectacles and thus addressed the trembling prisoner before him: "My lad, it is very lucky for you that instead of stealing gooseberries you were not brought before me for stealing a goose. There is a statute against stealing geese, but I can't find anything about gooseberries in all 'Burn.' So let the prisoner be discharged, for I suppose it is no offence."

THE MYSTERIOUS MURDER
.. OF ..
ELIZA BUTLER.

How an old woman was done to death at the lodge of Mr. Crutchley's mansion, near Ascot, in 1864, and how the crime remains a mystery to this day.

"Here is mystery indeed . . .
If silent objects could but speak,
Then we might learn."
—Old play by Sanderson, "The Will and the Way."

SUNNING HILL PARK, near Ascot, in the county of Berkshire, is a fine country house which, in the year 1864, was the seat of Mr. P. H. Crutchley. Embowered in the foliage of its luxurious grounds, the mansion cannot be seen from the highway, and occupies a lonely and secluded situation. It lies in a hollow, and is approached by a road leading from the village of Sunning Dale. At the farther end of this road existed—in the year I am referring to—a lodge belonging to Mr. Crutchley, who had placed there some years previously an aged female named Eliza Butler. It was a neat little place, with a whitewashed front and a central door, and a window on either side. A pretty flower garden separated it from a private pathway which led to the mansion, and a more peaceful, innocent spot it would be difficult to imagine. But we have been taught that often when the prospect pleases man is vilest, and in this dainty, white-curtained little cottage was committed a barbarous murder, the perpetrator of which has never been discovered.

The lodge was exactly half a mile from Backhurst Hill, and the only houses near were those of two or three farmers, whose scattered dwellings constituted the only neighbours of Sunning Hill Park House, as Mr. Crutchley's residence was then called.

Eliza Butler, the victim of this mysterious outrage, was a widow and over seventy years of age. She was a singularly reticent person of rather a secretive than a confidential frame of mind, and very little was known of her antecedents in the district. Although in very impoverished circumstances, she seemed superior to her situation, and spoke with an air and accent which denoted a rather better education than she might have been credited with. She had few visitors, and fewer letters, and was regarded as somewhat of an enigma by the few persons who knew her by sight or to speak to. She was in receipt of parish relief at the time of the murder, the motive for which would appear to have been rather that of malice than of plunder, for there was little in the cottage to attract the covetous eyes even of the most desperate robber or most reckless tramp. Her actual position with regard to Mr. Crutchley was never made quite clear. That she was employed by him as lodge-keeper is certain, but she likewise acted as housekeeper to a certain trainer of horses in the neighbourhood, who occasionally stayed a night or two at the cottage, and also took in a lodger who was employed as a labourer by a farmer residing near.

The murder of this unfortunate woman was discovered on Saturday, October 15, 1864. A carrier named Kentish called at the lodge at half-past five on that afternoon, in order to leave a parcel of newspapers to be sent up to the "big house." He knocked at the window, but could get no reply, and at last was induced to lift the latch and open the door, being somewhat alarmed by peculiar sounds issuing from within. The carrier found the old woman sitting on the floor near the entrance, her head covered with wounds and streaming with blood. He asked her what was the matter, and endeavoured to raise her from the ground; but she was only able to utter a few exclamations of pain, and then relapsed into utter insensibility. Kentish went to the nearest farm and applied for assistance. Dr. Hewitt, of Winkfield—in which parish the lodge was actually situated—was sent for; but the poor old woman died while he was being fetched, never having become conscious even for a moment. On arrival, he expressed the opinion that she had been attacked about half an hour before the first discovery, and stated that he thought the injuries had been inflicted with a short, stout stick. There were three severe cuts on the back, and two on the top of the head. These were obviously caused by some blunt instrument, and her cap was cut through.

Sergeant Mansell immediately took the case in hand, and despatched messengers for Inspector Reece and Superintendent Iremonger, of the Berks Constabulary, who made a thorough search of the premises. They discovered by the victim's side a bunch of keys and a seal engraved with the letter "G." The first move on the part of the police was to question the lodger, who had not then returned from his work, and the account he was able to give of his proceedings all that day was perfectly satisfactory and removed any possibility of suspicion being directed against him. Their next step was to interrogate the horse trainer to whom I have referred as having occasionally stayed at the lodge and whose name I must, for certain reasons, withhold. I may mention that he is still alive and well, though he has long since retired from a profession in which he has been remarkably successful. This gentleman was also able to prove beyond question that he was in no way connected with the terrible event, and he stated that he had seen Mrs. Butler that day in her usual health and spirits. He was unable to suggest anything which could throw any light upon the tragedy, for the deceased's friends and relatives were all unknown to him, and Mr. Crutchley himself knew little more about her. The police, as a matter of fact, were never able to discover any of Mrs. Butler's relatives or connections, and she did not appear to have a friend in the world. But she might have had a secret enemy, and this is the most probable theory, for robbery was quite out of the question.

Reece and Iremonger remained on the premises all that Saturday night in the rather far-fetched notion that the murderer might return to the cottage. They learnt, as the result of close inquiry, that a tramp had been seen in the neighbourhood that day, who had threatened and insulted persons who refused him alms, and they at once came to the conclusion that this unknown man was the slayer of Mrs. Butler. He might, they thought, have forced his way into the lodge and struck down his unfortunate victim when she declined, through her own poverty, to assist him. But against this theory was the fact that nothing had been disturbed or taken away, and there were several little articles lying about which a hungry and not too particular tramp would have been glad to remove and to sell for any trifle they might fetch. Indeed, a little money was found in the old woman's bedroom, which could hardly have escaped the notice of the assassin if theft had been the object of his visit.

Nothing fresh transpired in connection with this murder for a space of three weeks. Then certain information reached Superintendent Iremonger, and he began to entertain hopes of laying hands on the cruel and cowardly perpetrators—if indeed more than one was engaged in the deed, as he suspected. He went into the adjoining county of Bucks, and, amongst other places, visited Great Marlow Fair, in hopes of hearing of two tramps, a man and a woman, who had been seen by the carrier Kentish close to the lodge a few minutes before the discovery of the murder. They had a dog with them, and their appearance was minutely described by Kentish, who had taken particular notice of them as they passed him. The superintendent learnt that two tramps named W. Smith and Thomas Guest had been arrested the previous day for vagrancy, and were at that time in Aylesbury Gaol. A woman had been in their company until they arrived in Great Marlow—also a dog; but the former had then left them and the animal had gone with her. Iremonger at once sent for a man named Frederick Smith, a coachman to Lady Wiltshire, who he hoped would be able to identify one of the two men. Smith was unable to recognise Guest, but the other prisoner he immediately declared to be a tramp who had called to beg at the stables on the Saturday of the murder and whom he had told to go away. He described this

William Smith—whose real name was afterwards discovered to be Croft—as then wearing a blue guernsey with a white smock over it, a billycock hat, worn trousers, and very old shoes. Now, the suspect was wearing prison clothes when identified by his namesake, but when the apparel which the former had been wearing when brought to the gaol was inspected, it was found that it fully corresponded in every particular to that which Smith said he had worn when he had seen him in the Ascot neighbourhood. One spot of blood was found upon the smock-frock, but his shirt was quite clean, and had evidently very recently been washed.

This man Croft was sentenced to one month's imprisonment on the vagrancy charge, and in the interim the police made every endeavour to trace the woman who had been seen with him, and who, it was believed, could supply important information. As for Croft himself, he was a man of medium height and forbidding appearance, with dark hair and whiskers and very deep-set eyes.

stated before the magistrates that on Sunday morning, October 16, when on her way to church, she encountered a man and woman who appeared to be quarrelling. The female called her companion "a murdering villain!" and the man made an attempt to strike her, but refrained when he saw that his movements were being observed. The woman continued to abuse the man, and said: "You know you are a murderer," and the latter turned towards her and said something which the witness could not hear. She also said, "You'll soon be somewhere where you won't be able to kill people." The witness could not say positively that the prisoner was the man, who appeared to her to be darker and dirtier than Croft, and with more hair on his face; but it must not be forgotten that the latter had had a month in gaol and would naturally emerge cleaner than when he went in. She thought, however, that the prisoner was the man.

Croft was remanded from time to time, but no fresh evidence was forthcoming, and it was clear that no jury could

FOUND THE OLD WOMAN SITTING ON THE FLOOR.

A man named Crutcher, employed by a Mr. Frank Cator, near Windsor, came forward to state that he had noticed two tramps about a fortnight before at a place not very far from the scene of the murder. They were quarrelling and he distinctly heard the woman say, "You villain! You have murdered that old woman!" The man was dressed as Croft, alias Smith, had been when he appeared at Marlow, and there could be little doubt it was the same individual. A Mr. Wallis, a market gardener, who was with Crutcher at the time these tramps passed, was able to corroborate this story and to give a minute account of their appearance. A reward of £100 was at this stage offered for the apprehension of the murderer, and at the expiration of his sentence Croft was arrested for the more serious crime, and brought before the magistrates at Maidenhead. To Iremonger he said: "I am innocent; I never was at Winkfield, and I don't know where Winkfield is." It leaked out that a bundle of old clothing had been found near the hedge beneath which the prisoner had passed a night at Great Marlow; but nothing transpired to connect him with this discovery.

A Mrs. Meyrick, living at 2, Cambridge Terrace, Windsor,

be expected to convict on such trifling circumstances of suspicion. There was really nothing to connect him with the deed, and he was ultimately discharged. No one else was ever arrested, and the mystery remains one of the unfinished chapters of a century of crime. Nevertheless, a very curious and suggestive incident has come to my knowledge in regard to this mysterious affair.

In the year 1872 an Irishman residing at Ashford, in Kent, became seriously ill, and in the belief that he was not long for this world sent for a Roman Catholic priest, to whom he presumably unburdened his conscience. What actually passed between the two has never become positively known, but the man, whose name was O'Hennessy, died a few days later, and his death-bed "confession" became the subject of much local gossip. The priest did not disguise the fact that the deceased had admitted that he had committed a crime, but his own lips were sealed. However, in a box which belonged to O'Hennessy, and of which he had always taken great care, many newspapers were found, all of which bore the date 1864, and contained allusions to the murder of Mrs. Butler in that year.

THE CURSE OF BEAUTY.

The Brutal Murder of Mary Corbett by William Hope.

"See beauty and virtue poor, dependent, solitary, walking the world defenceless! Oh, then the devotion changes its character; the same crowd gather eagerly around—fools, fops, libertines—not to worship at the shrine, but to sacrifice the victim."

—BULWER LYTTON, "Money."

MARY CORBETT was very happy because she was very beautiful, and she was sufficiently sensible to understand that beauty in woman is a power and a glory.

It can also be on occasions (but this Mary was too unsophisticated to realise) a curse, bringing in its train ignominy, degradation, and ruin.

The girl, simple enough in most things, was forced to recognise her personal charms. The admiration and adulation of all members of the male sex who met her was so pronounced and pointed that the happy thought was constantly driven into her brain, "Mary, you are beautiful."

Mary felt that she had been marked out for the special beneficence of God; she was His favoured one, the recipient of His greatest of all gifts to woman—beauty. Arguing in this strain with herself, Mary Corbett acknowledged that the Giver of all gifts must require from her a spotless rectitude of conduct in exchange for His generosity. Accordingly, she strove to be pure and virtuous in all things.

Mary was a girl of humble station. Her parents had been poor but honest people. Unfortunately, however, Mr. and Mrs. Corbett met with an untimely end, and Mary, then a girl of sixteen, was taken into service by a benevolent old lady, who resided near to Hereford.

The girl found her duties slight, and her mistress kind, so her time passed very pleasantly. Everywhere she went she made friends, not only amongst the opposite sex, but with women. No higher compliment than this can be paid to her goodness of disposition and sweetness of temper, for women are seldom held in bondage by female physical attractions; indeed, are generally provoked by such attractions into excessive criticism, and this mostly of a hostile nature. But with Mary it was different. The girl was so innocent, so unpretentious, so affable, and, withal, so child-like, that nobody could find it in their hearts to harbour resentment against her.

We must hasten to make so charming a person's acquaintance. The scene is the rose-grown porch of a prettily-constructed rustic inn; a little village street runs to the left, whilst beyond is one undulating stretch of open meadows, fringed with dark trees; and far off in the distance there can just be discerned the grey steeple of a church, and the topmost chimneys of a solitary house, the abode of the family in whose service Mary Corbett had been engaged for some three years.

Two women were standing in the porch of the inn. The elder of the two was a stout, rubicund individual, with a pleasant, homely face, rendered roseate by innumerable kitchen fires, a twinkle in a pair of laughing brown eyes, and a hearty, affectionate manner. The younger was Mary, tall, and rather slender, with a small, oval, pink-and-white face, curtained by luxuriant masses of red-gold hair, and eyes deep blue and tremulous, like the depths of quiet waters. In the varying expressions that flitted over her beautiful countenance there was not the slightest trace of coquetry, wantonness, or sensuality.

"You look very happy this morning, Mary," said the hostess of the inn.

"I feel happy; I'm always happy."

"Ah, you're young yet!"

"Don't talk like that! It sounds as if you thought I should grow sad when I'm older."

"No, no; I wish you every happiness, my dear. But be careful——"

"Of what?"

"Of yourself."

"But why?"

"You know very well what I mean. You are beautiful."

Mary's face lit up with smiles.

"It's nice of you to say so."

"It's not that; beauty is a snare."

"Oh, dear me! A snare to whom?"

"Why, to men, of course."

"To men!"

"Yes; a snare and a temptation."

"Do you mean to say that men are tempted when they are near me?"

"Yes."

"Nonsense! This man, for instance?"

The elder woman's eyes followed Mary's gesture. A man was walking up the village street towards the inn. He was a thick-set, broad-shouldered individual, and had the appearance of possessing great strength.

"That man—William Hope—is one of all others I should be careful of if I were you," said the hostess.

"William Hope! Oh, he is harmless enough, and very kind, too."

Mary and the hostess of the inn.

"He's an animal, that's what he is, an animal, pure and simple, as my husband would have said."

The subject of this conversation now came up to the porch. He was a man evidently of the working class; his huge limbs were somewhat ungainly in their rugged strength his hands were gnarled and knotted with labour,

and the expression of his face was fierce and brutal; the eyes half hidden beneath prominent, shaggy eyebrows, the nostrils wide, and the lips thick and sensual.

"Well, missus, let me have my usual," he said, and then, turning to Mary, complimented her on her appearance.

"It's such a lovely day, Mr. Hope. Who could help feeling well?"

The three people walked into the inn parlour, where William was served with a pot of home-brewed ale. He sat down in a corner and watched Mary's every movement, knitting his heavy brows and staring out beneath them at the blithe, light-hearted creature as she tripped up and down and talked to her friend. He looked like a fierce animal feasting its gaze upon its unsuspecting prey. Presently Mary left, giving him a parting smile as she ran out of the

"Yes, it is cold."

"Have something to drink?"

"No, thank you, Mr. Hope."

"Now don't be proud. No offence meant. I'm sure just a little——"

"Well, just a little, then."

Mary was always afraid of being thought proud, so, not to hurt Hope's feelings, rather than from any desire to drink, she took a glass of port wine.

Her friend, the hostess, keeping a close eye on the girl, did not view her familiarity with Hope in a favourable light, and as soon as the wine-glass was empty reminded her that it was time to be getting home.

"Come, now, Mary, up at the house they will wonder where you've got to."

IN THE MORNING TWO LABOURERS FOUND THE BODY.

door. William Hope passed his hand over his face as if to clear something from his eyes.

"Why does that girl come here? She worries me."

"Worries you! My gracious, you're a nice person to be worried. Anyone would think the place belonged to you!"

"No offence, missus."

Shortly afterwards William went out, but he returned in the evening and sat drinking in the little parlour for over an hour.

He had not been there long before, breathless with running, Mary Corbett came in and asked for the hostess.

"What, Mary! It's late for you."

"We've run short of bread, so they sent me to you. You will let us have some till to-morrow?"

"Oh, yes. Sit down a moment."

Mary sat down, whilst the hostess left the parlour, and William took a seat next to her.

"It's cold, rather, isn't it?" he said.

"Yes, I must be going."

"No hurry," said Hope, "no hurry. Stay and have another glass."

"No, no, I really couldn't Good night, Mr. Hope, and thank you very much."

The hostess walked with her to the porch.

"My!" she exclaimed, "how dark it is!"

"Yes, I shall have a run home."

"That's right, Mary. Good night!"

The girl waved her hand and darted away. In a moment she was lost to sight, enveloped in the blackness of the swift approaching night. The hostess went back into the parlour.

William Hope had gone.

"Why, where's William?" she said.

"Went out the back door," answered a customer. "Suppose he will be back in a minute, because he hasn't finished his beer."

William Hope did not return.

As soon as he reached the outside of the inn he took one look round, and then, taking to his heels, ran swiftly in the direction which he rightly judged Mary must have taken on her way home.

Mary, short of breath, had stopped running when she heard the sound of fast-approaching footsteps. The girl knew not fear, and did not quicken her pace. Instead, she looked round and saw William Hope panting and running, as if from a fiend, behind her.

"Why, it's you, Mr. Hope! What's the matter?"

The man stopped short.

"Oh, nothing's the matter, my dear."

"Then why were you running?"

"Because I wanted to catch you up."

"What for?"

"Because, my dear, I want to see you home."

He put his arm round her suddenly. The girl disengaged herself.

"I shall walk home alone. When you are sober you will repent this."

"Oh, you will go home alone, will you?"

"If I choose."

"If *I* choose—and I don't."

He put his arm round her again, drew her swiftly towards him, and kissed her on the lips.

Her face burnt with sudden shame, and for the first time in her life she felt afraid. She tried to disengage herself again; but this time it was impossible. His great arms were bound round her with the strength of iron girders, and she was quite powerless. He kissed her again, and his lips burnt like fire. She tried to hide her face, but he lifted her bodily in his arms, and covered her with kisses. Mary screamed loudly.

"Ah," cried Hope mockingly, "scream away! Who can hear you?"

"Let me—let me go!"

"Never!"

"Oh, please do! Don't be a coward!"

"A coward, eh? I've had enough of this! You've tortured me long enough; now it's my turn!"

"*I* tortured *you*?"

"You, with your devilishly beautiful face! But what's beauty when a man's strong? Why don't you kiss me?"

"Kiss you? I hate you!"

"Hate me? Ah, I like to hear that! Say it again."

"Oh, let me go! For heaven's sake, let me go!"

For answer he threw her to the ground. His terrible purpose was now plain, and the girl struggled and fought with all the strength of terror. They rolled over and over, whilst the lonely meadows echoed with her screams. It was all to no avail; Hope had the strength of a maniac, and Mary was but a girl. She gave over fighting, and implored for mercy, wept and entreated; but her sobs were music to his ears, and he drank her tears until he became more than ever an inebriate sensualist.

* * * * * *

In the early morning two labourers found in the fields the mangled and dishevelled body of a woman, cold and dead. Her clothes were torn to shreds, her limbs twisted, her eyes protruding from their sockets, and fixed in an agonised stare. A blood-flecked froth still stood on her lips, and her shoulders and breasts were one mass of bruises.

The police were summoned, and they had hardly begun their investigations before they saw the advisability of arresting William Hope.

Two constables were despatched on that service, and found their man busily engaged in a vegetable garden.

"William Hope, we arrest you for the murder of Mary Corbett."

He threw down his spade and shrugged his shoulders.

"I suppose I must come with you, although I know nothing about the business."

"Anything you say will be taken down and used as evidence against you."

"Then I shall say nothing."

He was tried for murder, ably and ingeniously defended, but found guilty and condemned to death. Then his sullen bravado broke down, and he confessed his guilt.

He had been mad. The girl's beauty had tortured him. He could bear the sight of her no longer. At the cost even of the gallows he must work his desire: had done so, and must pay the penalty. He admitted that, having violated the girl, he had ended by throttling her.

The miserable wretch died on the scaffold at Hereford, on April 15, 1863, protesting love for his victim and repentance for his crime.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

The Will for the Deed.

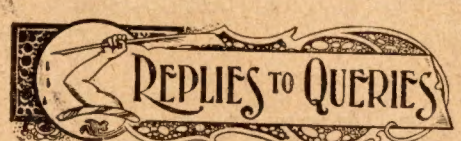
When Dr. Guthrie was a country clergyman in a Scotch village, almost buried in the Highlands, one of his parishioners, who was a most kind, generous, and clever man, overflowing with good nature, was his own worst enemy owing to his fondness for drink, which ruined all his enterprises. When he lay at the point of death the lawyer was sent for to draw up a will to the dictation of his client. The latter was most thoughtful and generous, and went on mentioning handsome sums as bequests to his friends, till the lawyer at last ventured to remark, "But, Mr. McNab, I don't believe you have all that money to leave!" To this the ready reply was given, "Oh, I know that as well as you, but I just want to show them my goodwill."

The Biters Bit.

In the year 1735 a gentleman was riding in a carriage across Hounslow Heath, when he was stopped by two highwaymen, who demanded his money in the usual way, accompanied with a volley of oaths and threats as to what they would do if he refused. The traveller had a large sum of money in the carriage, and he admitted, with great anguish and despair, that his life was in their hands. He informed them that his name was General Macartney, and said that no doubt they were aware that a large reward had been offered by the Government for his head; if they robbed him of the small sum of money he had he must inevitably be captured and executed. On hearing this the highwaymen saw that it would be a good and profitable stroke to take him prisoner, hand him over to the authorities, and claim the reward. They accordingly did so; but what was their surprise when, on taking him before the magistrate, that official shook him by the hand, asked him how he was, and ordered his captors into custody. It transpired that the money in the carriage was Government property, and the two highwaymen were duly tried and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

A Sordid Jew.

In the year 1823 Lord Cockburn and Judge Jeffrey defended a female for murder. The evidence proved that she was the daughter of a captain in the army, and was a well-educated young lady. By a series of misfortunes she had fallen by degrees, until she became finally the keeper of a house of assignation, and in a brawl stabbed a man to death. Even the eloquence of a Jeffery could not save her from being sentenced to death. She had, it transpired, an early attachment to an English Jew, and a few days before the date fixed for her execution she asked him to visit her. At their last interview she cut an orange in two, and gave him one half, charging him at the same time to stand at a particular window opposite the scaffold, and when he saw her apply her half to her lips he was to put his half to his lips at the same time as a last signal. It afterwards transpired that she had bequeathed all her property by her will to the Jew, the amount being about £3,000. He accepted the legacy, but absolutely refused to pay the cost of her defence, and it was only when her solicitor sued him that the sordid Jew was obliged to discharge the debt.



M. Randall.—The Wyndham Road Crime will make its appearance in due course.

R. J. (Garw Valley).—Yes; a small yearly salary is and was paid by the London Sheriffs.

R. McK. (Gateshead).—A little bit out of our line, but will make the necessary inquiries.

Ajax (Bristol).—What you refer to is somewhat out of our usual run, but it is quite likely that we shall do a series of these in course of time, in which the one you mention would naturally figure.

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